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A HOME WEEKLY FOR WINTER NIGHTS AND SUMMER DAYS.

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No. 302.

## ALEXANDER.

BY T. C. HARRAUGH.

'Tis o'er! Into the palace creep  
The moonbeams robed in gold;  
They gently fall upon the face  
Of Persia's monarch cold.  
Is this the man by nations cursed?  
The petted child of Fame—  
Who wrote upon the earth in blood  
Arbela's tuneful name?  
Is this the chief at whose command  
Red ran the lucent wave?  
Who raised the golden goblet high,  
And drank to earth—his slave?  
Ah! who is fit to fill the throne  
Of Philip's warlike son?  
As harmless as the lamb now lies  
The Lion of Macedonia!  
These pallid lips no more will taste  
The wine that fired his brain;  
These icy cheeks will never feel  
Love's burning kiss again!  
The arm that struck proud nations low  
In battle red and wild,  
Is helpless now; it could not wrong  
The Indoos' mothers' child!  
Lift up your heads, ye nations all,  
That bowed to him the knee!  
Lift up your heads and shout for joy  
From Issus to the sea!  
Fear not the siren at his couch,  
Whose false tears fall like rain;  
For her no gods will call to life  
Earth's incubus again!  
Come, satraps, gather round the chief  
Who gave ye each a crown;  
The scepters that ye hold aloft  
May soon be stricken down.  
The guarantees of life you boast  
All vanished with the sun!  
The vanquisher of all the world  
Lies dead in Babylon!  
Here, as the Sacred Volume tells,  
Another king as great  
As he who fills the royal cot  
In death's majestic state,  
Amid the revel, saw his doom  
Writ by God's awful hand;  
Let drop the sacred cup profaned,  
And perished with his land!  
Let Alexander sleep death's sleep—  
The sweetest since his birth;  
No longer earth hath need of him,  
And he hath done with earth.  
Now, satraps, leave the royal dead;  
To him no longer cower;  
Back to your States, and fight again  
Like mountain wolves, for power!

## Happy Harry,

THE WILD BOY OF THE WOODS;  
OR,  
The Pirates of the Northern Lakes.

BY OLL COOMES,

AUTHOR OF "IDAHO TOM," "DAKOTA DAN,"  
"BOWIE-KNIFE BEN," "OLD HURRICANE,"  
"HAWKEYE HARRY," ETC., ETC.

### CHAPTER V. THE LAKE SCUD.

THE man that stood before our young friend was full seven feet in height, and in the night appeared taller. He was built in proportion to his stature, with great muscular arms, swelling chest and massive form, to which a tremendous beard, reaching far down upon his breast, gave additional strength. But it was snow-white.

He was dressed in a suit half-civilized and half-savage, which gave his powerful form a formidable appearance. Fifty years had detracted nothing from his physical manhood, while his venerable beard and hair gave to him an air of wisdom and mental ripeness.

He was armed with a long "Kentucky" rifle, a brace of pistols and a hunting-knife; and as he appeared upon the beach he dropped the butt of his rifle to the ground, and, crossing his hands over the muzzle, gazed around him and at Harry and his dog in silent astonishment. He knew the Wild Boy of the Woods, and was astonished to see him there in the plight he was in. They had met before and had spent days together, but always in the forest. But neither one knew aught of the other's habitation, nor of his life beyond their first meeting in the wild-wood. It is true, Harry had heard something of a reputed giant, called Long Beard, that frequented the forest bordering on St. Clair, but as there are always so many stories prevalent on the border of mysterious giants, avengers and spirits, he gave no credence to the report until he actually met the long bearded man himself.

Belshazzar growled fiercely and seemed inclined to arrest the man's further advance, but his master bade him be quiet, and he again laid down.

Seeing the giant did not reply to his greeting, Harry said:

"Long Beard, I am monst'rously happy to meet you. I am for a golden fella."

"Why, Harry, my little fellow, are you lost? Are you in trouble?" the giant asked, in a deep, measured tone.

"Me lost! hoppin' horns! no, g'neral. But I'm wet-soakin' wet—me and Bell are. We've had the gol-awfulest, bloodiest, wickedest fight that ever took place on St. Clair's shores."

"Indeed! I thought I heard a fearful racket off heraways," Long Beard said, with that same deep, measured tone; "but are you hurt, my boy?"

"Wuss than that, Big Beard, I'm tottally tuckered out, demoralized. I was never so tired in all my life. I'm soakin' wet, and never felt so ornery in my life. But Je-whiz, we had a magnificent fight—me and Bell and the boys. It was superb, the way we reeled the red-skins off onto the great black skin of



'I declare it's a boy, and he's dead as a door-nail.'

eternity. I tell ye, them Spartan fellers we read about doin' such big fightin' at—Trigonometry couldn't hold a candle to us. But, Long Whiskers," and his voice fell to a serious tone, "I'm afraid one of the boys went under, while the other ort to 'a' died afore his mother war born."

"Why, Harry?"

"He war a pusillanimous, unrectified traitor, and betrayed his friend—a splendid young man with sojer clothes on."

"Harry, come with me; I want to know more about this affair. My boat lies off north of here. I will make a fire in the cabin, and while you are drying your clothes you can tell me of your day's adventure."

"That's fair, dogged if it ain't, Big Beard, and I guess I'll accept of your hospitality; for I don't feel any too much like laying around loose to-night. Times are revivin', g'neral; I guess thar's goin' to be a war, sure enough."

"A war?" exclaimed Long Beard, turning suddenly upon the lad as if startled by his words; "what do you know about a war?"

"Why, hoppin' horns! g'neral, haven't you heard of the war 'twixt this country and England?"

"I have not, Harry."

"Well, neither have I, g'neral; but I guess they'll arrange things for a high old squabble of a war, if they can agree on it."

A faint smile stirred the placid calmness of the giant's face, and he said:

"Come on, Harry, you will take cold in those wet clothes."

The youth and his dog followed him some distance along the shore, when they came to where the little schooner, rigged with sails, was tied up in a cove or bay. They went aboard, the boat was unfasted, sail hoisted, when the little craft glided out of the bay into the lake and sped away over its bosom.

The craft was about twenty feet in length by eight in width. Forward was a little cabin extending from the hatchway to about three feet above the deck. From the cabin to the rear extremity of the boat extended a long pole, or beam, parallel with the deck, and about two feet above it. It was attached to an upright post aft, but of what use it could be Harry could not imagine.

Long Beard conducted Harry and his dog down into the cabin, when he at once struck a fire on the elevated stone hearth in the apartment. The smoke and heat escaped through an opening in the roof.

The lad removed his outer garments and hung them around the fire to dry, substituting a blanket furnished by the giant, in their place. He next turned his attention to his fire-arms. He drew the charge from his rifle and wiped the barrel dry. The contents of his powder-horn were perfectly dry, but those

of his bullet-pouch were thoroughly soaked but not materially damaged.

Meanwhile an animated conversation had been carried on between the man and boy.

"I've been in many predicaments, Big Beard," the youth finally said, when they touched upon the subject, "but this one to-night was the nastiest one I ever got into. I'm afraid Belshazzar thar will have a spell of the croup."

"How many savages boarded the raft?"

"Seven; and they fit like screech-owls. But come down to the fine thing of it, we had eight enemies to contend with. As I said before, the feller Mucklewee was a traitor. He had arranged the bull-trap, of course, 'c'ase he was 'tother man's guide. But when I saw the light from their tent, I concluded to know who they were, and sot to work thinkin' up some caper to play 'em to git inside their tent. I soon got it. I let on that I was dead, and sent Belshazzar after help to their tent. He understood a thing or two, g'neral. He's a wonderful knowin' dog, he is for a square fact; and when I'm hurt he'll just pick me right up and carry me anywhere. He's stout as a lion, g'neral, he is for a loud fact. I rode on his back one whole day the time I got my foot hurt, and he never minded it a bit. But as I was goin' to say, I sent him to them fellers' tent, and after repeated trials, he brought up to where I laid, all covered with blood from that cut across my head, whar a blunderin' fool grazed me with a bullet awhile before. The men kindly helped me down to their tent, and when they found I wasn't quite dead they told me so, and I recovered swiftly. I got right up and went out to wash my face and hands and slick up a little, and it was then that I disilvered the difficulty the hull caboodle of us was in. If it'd 'a' bin you or me instead of that young soldier chap, we'd 'a' seen through the hull thing afore ever we planted a tent there. It's natural for us ole rats of the woods to be cautious and keep out of danger if possible; but soldiers don't know anything about Ingins."

"What kind of a man was this soldier of whom you speak?"

"A dog-goned fine young feller with the uniform of a captain on. He belongs somewhere South, and war on his way to Laketown, and I'll bet anything he's a bearer of government dispatches to Major Van Horne, and that old Mucklewee knowed it, and wanted to git hold of his papers to sell them to the British."

"Very likely, Harry," replied Long Beard, reflectively.

"And great hoppin' horns! wouldn't I, though be proper glad to know how he comes out of the fight. I'm afeard he went under, poor

feller! But then it's some consolation to know we've all got to die. What puzzles me is how I have escaped so long. I'm a reg'lar walkin' misfortune. My first misfortune was bein' born at all, and the Lord only knows how I've had it up hill, ever since. Thar's not life enough in me to stand hard knocks. I'd give anything if I had as boomin' big anatomy as you; and hornits! don't I wish I had a fist and foot like you. They'd stand me many good turns, they would for a solid fact. A fellow wouldn't have to plant the foot on an Ingins' base, or shove the fist into his features more'n once. I've had more'n one lickin' on account of bein' a boy, and Lord only knows how many are laid up for me. Old Phineas Blume says he can't die happy till he wagon-whips me. Reckon you never heard of him, did you, Big Beard?"

"I think not," replied Long Beard.

"Well, he war a caution to all that's mean and stingy—why, stingy is no name for it. He was so awful, owadacious hoggish that he'd dive to the bottom of St. Clair to take a chaw to-baccor, for fear some one'd ask him for a chaw. He's been known to try to jug up sunshine to use at night to save candles, and a lot other sich mean things. But the meanest he ever done was at Deer Creek school-house, one Sunday. There was meeting there, and old Phin Blume went down. After the preacher had got through, Deacon Podge went around among the congregation, takin' subscription for the benefit of the minister. Everybody give a little sumthin', if it wasn't more'n a chaw to-baccor, but old Blume. He didn't give a mite; however, the deacon said nothin', and handed over his gatherin' to the preacher, who sorted out the different things and put 'em in his pockets, took a fresh quid of to-baccor, and then said, 'The Lord loves a cheerful giver, but despises the stingy miser.' What should old Blume do jist as soon as he got out but swear that the preacher meant him when he spoke 'bout the miser."

"He went o' home a-rantin' and a-ravin', and cussin' and swearin'." He declared he'd break up the next meetin' they had there or overturn the brimstone diggin's; but nobody believed him, and so the thing dropped there. But the very next meetin' at Deer Creek, Phineas Blume actually combed his hair, washed his face, and changed his moccasins, and come to meetin', and took a seat in a back corner by himself. I seed somethin' mean turkin' in his eyes, and knowed he meant business. I seed he had somethin' kivered under his wamust-tail, and s'posed it war his old moccasins he war goin' to donate to the preacher when the hat was passed around. Well, the preacher sung his song, prayed his prayer, and give out his text, which I'll never forgit. It war: 'Above all, taking the shield of faith, where-

with ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.'

"I seed ole Blume smile when he read this off, and give his wamust-tail a hitch. But the preacher went into it, and jist raked it down. Oh, hornits! how he pitched into the wicked; and I guess ole Blume war the only mean sinner in the house. It made him squirm, I tell you, jist as though a fiery dart was ranklin' in his old heart. But all the time I kept one eye on his face, and I could see forty devils were lurkin' in that satanic smile, which he tried to make folks believe war pity. Wal, things run along smoothly for awhile, and the minister war rantin' 'bout the fiery darts of the wicked, when, all of a sudden, he clapped his hands to his nose, and uttered a word that came mighty nigh bein' a cuss word. B'sness was suspended for awhile, and everybody became clamorous to know what the matter war—everybody but ole Blume. He jist reclined there in the corner, smilin' away as calm and placid as an angel. But things soon got settled when the preacher said it wa'n't nothin' but a stray yaller-jacket that had come in through the open window and stung him on the nose. So he went into it again on the 'darts of the wicked' with renewed vigor. Things went along swimmingly for awhile, when all at once ole Mrs. Trott gave a fearful scream and begun clawin' at her hair like mad. Preachin' was suspended again, and sister Trott's ills inquired after. She said sumthin' had prodded her on the head with a sharp instrument, and while she was fuming about it, brother Sharp let slip, unthoughtedly, the plumpest little oath you most ever heard a good man use, and it come out kind o' natural, too. He said sumthin' had pricked him on the upper lip, and nigh about killed him. The next minute ole uncle Jerry Finch got a thrust in the ear that bounced him clear off his seat. Then it wa'n't but a little while till Mirandy Brookover got a drive on the left cheek that made the old maid's tongue flutter like an ague chill. Next follered aunt Jane Ann Stump, an awful old termagant, who got an owadacious pop above the eye that knocked her a-fukin', heels over head off the bench. And yet no one knew from where all this deviltry came from; but when ole Blume smilingly suggested that it might be the 'fiery darts of the wicked,' I suspected something, and kept my eyes on that ole galvanized sinner—I did for a fact. And now what do you suppose I disilvered, Long Beard?"

"Couldn't imagine, Harry," replied the giant, his bearded face aglow with a smile.

"I'll tell you: I disilvered that that ornery ole sneak had a hornit's nest under his wamust! I see now why he'd set down in a dark corner; it was so's that the insects would poll out for the light as soon as they got out, and wouldn't sting him. It beat me, it, for a fact; and afore I could tell on him, things got quiet, and the preacher went on with his darts of the wicked.' But I kept a sly watch on ole Blume, and all at once I seed him raise his wamust, when out popped three big hornits, and away they darted around the room a-buzzin'! Two of them escaped at the window, but 'tother seein' ole Squire Fipps sinkin' into a gentle doze, descended on gauzy wing and slipped its javelin into his under lip. Lord! it made the old feller fairly 'sizz.' But things got quiet once more, and the preacher began to bring things to a close. When they all riz to sing the dockology, you'd ort to seed 'em folks as had been stung. I had to snicker right out, and that old hulk of a Blume kept his head down, and his eyes closed, while he sung away as though he war the most innocent lamb in the flock. The preacher's nose was all swelled up, till it glistened like the top of his bald head. He had to tip-toe to see over his proboscis. Brother Sharp's upper lip had swelled till it projected like a water-shed, while the under lip of Squire Fipps pouted out like the lips of a motherless colt. Mirandy Brookover's cheek puffed out like a stuffed toad, and shoved the corner of her mouth away down to her chin. Jane Ann Stump's eye had swelled shet, but the other 'n' done business for both, but it looked lonely over at the men's side. Jerry Finch's ear was so big that it made him lop-sided, it did, for a fact. Altogether, gov'nor, it was the sorriest and most laffable sight ever seed. And you'd ort to 'a' heard them martyrs sing! Great hornits! they roared as if for all that was out. Mirandy Brookover swelled so long on the upward scale that she like to never got her breath again. But, Big Beard, right in the middle of that dockology, what did that pizen ole Blume do but jerk out that whole hornit-nest and throw it over in the middle of the house! Yes, it's a burnin' fact, he did do that very thing, and you may bet nobody waited for the 'amen,' but husselled out of that house like sixty. I got one awful sting. The gosh-oned thing launched its harpoon right slap into my face, and, oh, but I swore vengeance on that demon, Blume! I war determined to be even with him, and, Big Beard, you may bet I did; and now I'll tell you how I done it—now, now, Belshazzar! Dreamin' of Ingins!"

The dog started up, with a low growl, and turned toward the door of the cabin.

Harry arose, opened the door and gazed out. A cry burst from his lips.

"Great hoppin' horns! Big Beard! The Old Scratch is payin' a dozen piratical demons have boarded our schooner!"

### CHAPTER VI.

LONG BEARD'S SWEEPSTAKE.

THE reply that Long Beard made to Happy Harry's startling announcement was calm and



indifferent. He rose to his feet, and with the soft tread of a lion, advanced to the door of the cabin, and gazed out. True enough, he discovered a dozen forms, most of which he saw were savages, standing aft. Alongside the schooner lay their canoes.

"The shadowy impost they must think I'm asleep. They have come to their death, or—" "Or to ours, one'r t'other," interrupted Harry. "It jist seems as though the varmints war determined on exterminatin' me."

"You must be a thorn in their sides, Harry," the giant quietly remarked.

"A thorn! great hoppin' hornits! if I ever git through this night, I'm goin' to turn to a contagion and spread through the Ingin country, and smite the red vagrants hip and thigh. I will, for a bloody fact."

"You need have no fear of getting into trouble on this craft, Harry. Those savages meant to trap us, but they'll be trapped. There, one of them is coming this way to reconnoiter, no doubt. As soon as he finds the door is closed they'll make an attack. But the moment they start this way, I propose to sweep the deck. Now, you keep an eye on that one crawling this way."

Harry was not a little surprised at the giant's calm self-assurance, and wondered wherein he possessed the power to sweep the deck, as he declared he would. The youth kept his eyes on the advancing savage through an opening in the door. The wily red-man crept softly toward the cabin and paused at the head of the steps, and gazed at the door a moment, then turned and crept softly back to his comrades.

They held a momentary consultation, then all together started toward the cabin.

"Now look out, Harry!" cried the giant.

The boat was gliding along steadily, her sails drawn taut and full; but scarcely had the giant's words of caution fallen from his lips, ere the boat seemed to reel like a drunken man—turn almost at a right angle, and so sailing, it came nigh upsetting. Simultaneously with this change of course, the long beam hitherto mentioned swept suddenly and violently around, like a mighty arm, and knocked every savage, heels over head, into the lake.

"Gemently hornits!" exclaimed Happy Harry, completely astonished. "Big Beard, every savage is gone a-flukin' overboard. Gracious! what's it mean?"

A low laugh escaped the giant's lips.

"It cleared the deck, did it?" he asked.

"Cleared the deck! Why, that's no name for it. That pole just swung around like a mule's heel, and popped them over into the lake a-leakin' lightnin'! Great hornits! it war worth a playune, jist to see 'em reeled off; it war, for a sober fact; but there comes that dogged pole back. It's huntin' for more redskins, it is, sure as you're born."

"As the boat gets square with the wind, that pole takes its former position," explained Long Beard. "You see, this boat is a contrivance of my own. By means of these ropes and pulleys that you can see here, I am enabled to steer the craft, hoist or lower sail, or by a sudden pull on this rope, change the course of the boat almost instantly; and, as it swings around, the beam sweeps around, and all that stands in its way is raked off, as you have seen."

"Hoppin' hornits! what an all-killin' contraption it is! A reglar fightin'-machine. It don't like dogs, does it, general?"

"It is no respecter of persons. It would serve friend and foe alike, if acted upon. I have used it several times in sweeping the deck of savages, and never made a bad job of it yet."

"Wal, it's a mighty convenient thing, Big Beard, it is, for a downright fact. But, dogged if it didn't knock me and Belshazzar out of a fight; but then, it's all right. We're not overly anxious for a battle—we have had enough to-night. But strikes me your gig is trotting along pretty lively, general."

"Yes, we are moving along at a sharp speed now, and are going right down the coast. You see, the faster the boat is moving the quicker and stronger the arm out there sweeps the air."

"And so the stronger a queer pain strikes the Indians about the bulge of the bread basket, causing them to bow politely and retire quickly, to be embraced in St. Clair's placid deep."

"Exactly," replied the great, white-bearded man, with a grim smile, as he led the way out upon the deck.

They glanced far back over the misty waters, but no sign of the struggling enemy could be seen; but their boats, attached to the schooner, were dragging in its frothy wake behind.

"That crew'll never trouble us again," said the giant.

"No, no, general, they're gone. What a ghastly, ghastly world this is. But then, everybody has his notions, everybody his ways."

"Let's see," said Long Beard, reflectively; "you were just going to tell me about how you repaid old Blume for his hornets when the Indians boarded us. Now, as we are moving along with a good wind and fair prospect, you might kill time by narrating the story."

"It's a short story this time, governor; but I'll tell it anyhow. It war jist this way: Blume got to be rich as Croesus. He fell heir to five hundred dollars back in New Hampshire, and then you'd ort to see that old plebian come down with his style. He actually got a full suit of store clothes, washed and shaved, and went to slushin' on airs that'd a' beat anything in Boston town. And the first thing we knowed he got to crossin' the river to spark ole Squire Fipps's daughter, Susan, a sweet-scented gal of thirty-five, who jist puckerd up her mouth to all the other gals, and wouldn't sociate with anybody but rich Phineas Blume. Oh, yes, Blume war every thing to her; but people knowed old Tood Fipps, they did, for a scandalous fact. It war Mister Blume and Captain Blume with her; and the reason they called him captain was because he commanded a mud-sow once on which that wasn't but one other nigger besides himself. But, oh, me! how old Tood did gush; and everybody knowed it wasn't his personal beauty she war after, but his fortune—his five hundred dollars. It's awful queer, Long Beard, what difference clothes made at the store and a little money will make with female woman; but then, if that's love, no gal will ever set her claws on my head; she won't, for a sacred fact. But, as I war sayin', ole Squire Fipps had ort to a' shot Blume when he went there, for he war one o' the congregation that got so thunderin'ly hornited that Sunday at meetin'. But the feller's style and cash done it to the old man, and all they'd say war: 'Cap. Blume war a jolly dog—always playin' his pranks with somebody,' and he said that that hornit affair was the most capital joke of the season, illustratin' the text about the 'darts of the wicked' so forcible. But that's all the sense some people has got. One Sunday, however, I knowed Blume were going to see his

maple-sugar, and I concluded now was my time to be even with him for that hornit job I got. I knowed he had to cross the river in the canoe used at the ferry, so down I goes to whar the craft war tied up, and right under the seat, where he couldn't see, I cut a big, round hole, and plugged it up with a plug driven in from the outside. To this plug I tied a great, long, stout string, t'other end of which I tied to a bush that hung in the water, so the string was all under the water. I hid in the bushes to wait, and d'rectly here came old Blume, whistlin', 'I won't go home till mornin', till mornin', gay as a lark, and with a kind of a uppish snort, jumped into the canoe, seated himself, put on his buckskin gloves to keep his hands white, and then pulled out for t'other shore, where his sweet-cider, old Tood Fipps, stood waitin' for him, a-wavin' of a big yaller henkerchief and shoutin' ditties to him, like an Ottawa Ingin.

"Ha! ha! ha! Long Beard, it didn't take long to run out the full length of that string, when out popped the plug and in rushed the water like all sixty. Up jumped Captain Ehin Blume with a yoop, and then you'd ort to a' seed him tip toe it, flip and flirt."

"Hornits! hornits!" yelled I, runnin' down to the river bank, ready to split with laffability. "Damnation!" was all I could hear from the captain's lips, the wicked ole sinner; but the next instant he raised his wings, and out he sailed into the water, and now began the fun. The sp'illin' of his clothes war'n't nowhar—it wa'n't, for a fact. He couldn't swim a lick, and of all the flounderin' and fummikin' about I ever seed, he done it. Why, he kicked water forty feet high, and the river war all afoam. But he couldn't keep that up long; he war growin' feelber and feelber all the time, and I seed he war goin' under, and so I sent Belshazzar, here, out after him. The ole pup paddled up to him, and takin' him by the collar, yanked him across the river and laid him gently at the feet of his sweet pumpkin pie. Great hoppin' hornits, but if he wasn't in a plight! It'd made a dog-laff to a' seen him—dogged if Belshazzar didn't laugh his way when he swam over to me. I never seed a dog tickled like he war. He'd jist wag his head sometimes, thinkin' it war his tail, he war so full of dog-laff and besides himself. But, you bet, Blume had to resume his buckskin and homespun for awhile. It ruined his store clothes, and then the best of it was that naughty ole duck of hissen went square back on him—sacked him on the spot, and called him ole Blume, and 'cused him of bein' drunk. Broken-hearted and ruined, he became despit. He swore vengeance against me, took up his old blunderbus, and struck boldly out in search of me. The last I hear of him he war tryin' to climb the north pole to look over the country for a small boy and a big dog."

Long Beard could not repress an outburst of free, hearty laughter. The look of the boy's face, the mischievous sparkle of his big, blue eyes, his whimsical expressions, and the comic gestures that accompanied them, were sufficient to have provoked any one to laughter.

At length, however, the attention of the giant borderman was attracted by a moving light off toward the west. He knew it was along the shore. He called Happy Harry's attention to it, and after defining their geographical location, asked:

"Have you ever seen anything suspicious along this part of the coast, Harry?"

"Haven't, Big Beard; in fact, I haven't been this fur south along the lake for over a year; I haven't, for a historical fact. But I've been easin' myself down this way for several days. But, Big Beard, if that is anything you'd like to look into, Belshazzar and me can figger it out to a demonstration; we can, for a gospel fact. But there, the light's gone."

"Yes, I see it; nevertheless, I believe I will put ashore and reconnoiter a little along there. I'll touch the coast a mile below where the light disappeared."

Descending to the cabin, the giant at once changed the course of the boat toward the shore, and in less than an hour they had effected a safe landing. They now turned their faces northward, and, preceded by Belshazzar, followed along the coast for some distance. Further progress was finally disputed by a long, narrow bay cutting out abruptly into the woods. This bay was skirted by a wall of rock rising almost perpendicular from the water's edge, and ranging from five to a hundred feet in height. Its facade was covered with small bushes that grew out of holes and fissures, and a festoonery of vines that trailed their graceful length in the water.

The moon was now in the zenith. The dull, hazy mist that hung over lake and woodland at the beginning of night had disappeared. The two scouts were enabled to see all the northern side of the bay quite distinctly, and while they stood regarding the rocky shore now rendered grandly picturesque in the mellow moonlight, they made a discovery that caused them no little curiosity. Midway between the lake and the other extremity of the bay was a narrow rift or passage in the rocky wall sloping down to the water's edge, and a little to the right of this passage was moored a canoe, half of whose length was concealed under the overhanging vines.

Long Beard turned to Harry and said:

"This is about the point where we saw that light."

"Yes, I believe it is, governor," replied the youth, "and I should not wonder if the man or men that owns that canoe knows all about the light."

"I propose to know something more about the matter, Harry. I am going to pass around to the other side and approach that canoe by way of that rift you can see near it; then I will explore the immediate vicinity for some clue to that light. I shouldn't wonder at all if there was a cavern leading back into that hill; and if so, rest assured it is used for no good purpose. If I find nothing, or no one, I will charter the canoe and cut straight across to you. But, while I am gone, Harry, I want you to stand right here and keep a close watch—see if any one boards that canoe while I am going around. If such a thing should happen, don't fire, even if the occupant is a savage, but watch him closely and make out all you can concerning him."

"If it's an Ingin, governor, I'd like to make him out a pass for the brimstone diggin's, I would, for a veritable fact."

"Do not raise an alarm, Harry, unless it is absolutely necessary. And I will tell you why I am so anxious to find out the meaning of that light: you, of course, have heard that a band of lake pirates have been operating along the coast in both the United States and Canada. Their headquarters have defied the vigilance of the shrewdest detectives, and now a heavy reward is offered by the country for information that will lead to the capture of the freebooters. I have no desire to obtain that reward, but I am anxious to have the band broken up; and I'll tell you why: for the past week, off and on, a strange, piratical-looking little sail-boat has been dogging me about over

the lake in a rather suspicious manner. It has also been seen off the Islands, and I have fears for the safety of my friends there. Should they find out what treasures I have there my home would be desolated. Now you know, Harry, why I am so interested in this movement."

"Yes, yes, general," replied the youth, "and when one knows what he wants he can go ahead with half the trouble, he can for a square fact. Go ahead, Big Beard, and I'll keep a close watch on that boat from here."

The giant turned and moved away with noiseless footsteps, while Happy Harry sat down under the wide, branching boughs of an oak to await and watch. Belshazzar took his usual position at the feet of his young master.

Alone, and with the strictest silence imposed upon him, Harry very naturally fell into a train of reflections, from which he started at length, exclaiming indignantly to himself:

"Blast it, it's a nuisance to have to be a boy, for thar never war a boy but what war underrated. Everybody thinks he can do anything better than I can, and it's jist because I'm a boy. Now, why didn't he let me and Bell go round thar? But then Long Beard is a capital feller. And, gracious hornets, how sober! A smile on his face is like a burst of sunshine through a black, dismal cloud. But I'm afraid he'll git himself into trouble jist because he didn't let me and Bell go round thar."

Thus he passed some ten or fifteen minutes when he plainly saw Long Beard emerge from the narrow defile and pause at the water's edge.

For full a minute the giant stood and scrutinized the surrounding rocks and bay. He listened intently. He saw and he heard nothing, and feeling satisfied that no enemy was near, he stepped into the canoe that lay at his feet, and, seating himself, took up the paddle. But scarcely had he done so when Harry, who was watching on the opposite side of the bay, saw a light under the bank flash through the vines that partially concealed the prow of the boat, and the next instant the canoe, with Long Beard in it, was drawn suddenly under the bank, and disappeared entirely from view.

"Oh, great hornits! he's caught, he is, by heavens!" cried Happy Harry, starting to his feet as the stunning clash of a pistol, mingled with a cry of agony and the sound of a deadly struggle, rolled out in clearly-heard intonations from the depths of the great cavern!

#### CHAPTER VII.

##### IN THE FREEBOOTERS' DEN.

IN making the circuit of the bay, Long Beard had seen no signs of the presence of enemies, nor was he aware of the presence of danger until he had seated himself in the canoe. The flash of a light, and the suddenness with which the boat was drawn through the screen of vines and foliage, were the very first intimations he had of the trap he was in. He was thrown almost from the seat by the violent start of the craft, but recovering himself he endeavored to escape; but his enemies, seeing the intention, gave the canoe a sudden jerk that again threw him off his balance.

The boat was dragged and pushed through shallow backwater along a narrow cavern until it reached dry ground.

Here again Long Beard essayed to effect his escape. He had drawn one of his pistols, which he fired at a cloaked figure rushing upon him with a lantern in one hand and an upraised club in the other. The foe whirled half round and staggering, fell with a groan; but the next moment a dozen men surrounded the bearded giant and demanded his surrender.

One voice directed the movements of the men and sent a shudder to the heart of the borderman, yet it stole his nerves, and he fought with the desperation of a madman. His face grew livid with the terrible emotion surging within him; his teeth became set, his eyes glared with a deadly fire; the cords stood out upon his brow and neck, and his breast rose and fell as though by the palpitations of an internal volcano.

The foe closed in around him. He clenched his huge fist and beat them down. They lied and renewed the attack, rendered furious by his terrible blows. The sound of the struggle brought others to the scene of conflict.

A dozen were now upon him, but he fought them all. His strength seemed superhuman. His majestic form towered grandly above his adversaries. In the dim wavering light of two lanterns, his venerable beard rendered him an object that should have appealed to the wickedest heart.

To and fro across the cavern the combatants surged. The giant kept a space clear around him for awhile, but his enemies, growing more desperate under his smarting blows, crowded closer upon him; they finally made a charge—grappling him around the waist, by the arms, by the legs, until he was completely loaded down and unable to move. Then a cowardly wretch seized him by his white beard and jerked him to the ground. This ended the struggle. Before he could regain his feet the united strength of a dozen men was concentrated upon him and made him a prisoner. He was then securely bound, and conducted through the narrow windings of the cavern into a commodious apartment. Here he was seated upon a stone chair that had been hewn out of a stalagmite.

The prisoner now had an opportunity to look around him for awhile, but his enemies, growing more desperate under his smarting blows, crowded closer upon him; they finally made a charge—grappling him around the waist, by the arms, by the legs, until he was completely loaded down and unable to move. Then a cowardly wretch seized him by his white beard and jerked him to the ground. This ended the struggle. Before he could regain his feet the united strength of a dozen men was concentrated upon him and made him a prisoner. He was then securely bound, and conducted through the narrow windings of the cavern into a commodious apartment. Here he was seated upon a stone chair that had been hewn out of a stalagmite.

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Not less than forty or fifty men were passing to and fro across the cavern before and around the prisoner. All of them were heavily armed, and the most singular thing of all was of their weapons being of English patterns and of recent manufacture.

The giant studied considerably over this matter. It gave rise to a sudden thought—if these men into whose power he had fallen were the lake pirates they had been armed and equipped by, and were in the employ of the British Government. Taking into consideration the rumors of war with England, he thought it possible and altogether probable that he was right, and that the party had been placed there to accomplish some particular work of destruction the moment the order was given.

There was a military bearing about all the men, and but for the absence of uniforms, he would have sworn it was a party of royal troops. Some of them wore breeches of buckskin, made after the style of the border; others wore them made of woolen and cotton material.

The leader of the band—he whose voice had sent a shudder to Long Beard's soul—was a man of nearly fifty years. He had a fine martial figure and features regular in contour, but not handsome. A heavy grizzled beard covered a face marked with a life of dissipation. His eyes were of a dark-gray color, sharp and

keen, but cold and cruel. Sternness of character was written upon every feature of the man's face. He was dressed in a citizen's suit, but wore a sword at his side. His movements were as easy, his step as elastic as those of a youth of twenty. Time had made little inroad upon the physical man.

Long Beard knew the man, and feared him. Of all others in the wide world, he was the last person the giant borderman expected to meet. But, concealing his inward emotions, he appeared not to know him.

"You are doubtless surprised, big stranger, at the existence of such a place, or else you would have been more careful in your reconnaissance," this enemy finally said, approaching Long Beard. But, singular as it may seem, this man did not recognize the giant, else he was also affecting ignorance of the recognition.

"No one knows when he will step into an ant-hill," was Long Beard's response, spoken in a tone of bitter sarcasm.

"Nor of the stings of the ants," replied the commandant.

"You threaten me; well, you can afford to do so, now that I am powerless."

"Yes, you are powerless as a spy."

"Upon whom?"

"Know you not that our country has made war on England?" the man asked, with a furtive glance at the prisoner.

"You mean to say your country has made war upon mine," was Long Beard's answer.

"We are not British subjects."

"Nor American."

"No; we are Neutrals."

"Ready to pick up the spoils of war."

"As you please."

"I am no partisan. I am silent."

"Why, then, were you here?"

"Following the bent of my inclination."

"Which has got you into trouble."

"Why has it if you are Neutrals, and not outlaws?"

"We have a right to the benefit of our doubts, and will be compelled to hold you in custody until we have some assurance of your purpose in coming here."

"Fill you find out my home, inhuman wretch," thought Long Beard, as a look of bitter anguish swept over his face. He made no reply to the man's words, but became silent.

The commandant turned and walked away to where a man was seated upon a couch of dry leaves, his head swathed in a bandage, his face bruised and swollen.

"It is he, Bill, by heavens!" the commandant said in an undertone.

"I thought it war," mumbled the man of the bandage and swollen face.

Long Beard overheard the remark, and though he sickened with terror, the power of a lion gathered within him. His breast swelled and his eyes glowed.

Evil design was evident in the very tones and movements of the man, Kirby Kale, as he was addressed by his companions, and the giant felt satisfied that he was recognized. Knowing the man of old, no wonder he feared him.

Outwardly, however, Long Beard yielded submissively to his fate. He regarded Captain Kirby Kale with the greatest indifference. Few living persons had the least idea of the relationship, of the deadly hatred, of the dark secrets existing between these two men. Years of separation had failed to eradicate one tithe of this awful bitterness—so terrible that each one was afraid to declare his recognition of the other, although one was captor and the other captive. Bitter and strange indeed must have been the antagonism between these two men.

In the course of an hour Captain Kirby Kale came around, and in a tone of feigned indifference, said:

"Gray Beard, I have talked with my men, and all suggest that you be kept a captive until we are assured of your real character and of your place of residence."

"What is that to you, if you are neutrals, as you claim?" asked Long Beard.

"We are partial to our own safety."

"Then you fear a single man?"

"Only his tongue."

"You have reason for fear, then. Your conscience must be guilty."

"One word might bring a regiment of Americans down upon us."

"Then you favor the English?"

Captain Kale betrayed a slight emotion. He had incautiously said more than he had intended.

"I tell you, sir, I am neutral," he affirmed, severely.

"And I, too," replied Long Beard, indifferently.

"We'll see," and the captain turned and walked away. He was soon at the further extremity of the cavern, in a whispered conversation with a few of his men.

Leaning his head against the wall behind him, the prisoner gave himself up to reflection. A deep silence now fell upon the place. Most of the men had sought their couches. The lanterns burned steadily and brightly, but their light failed to reach the extremities of the cavern. Where the light ended and darkness began was a wall of purple gloom.

The cavern was a natural one, hollowed out by the hand of the Creator. Stalactites, tipped with the silver light of the lanterns, studied the black dome overhead like stars, and huge stalagmites rose up here and there, grim and ghastly. The prisoner noted every thing closely, for he had resolved to make an attempt at escape when the proper time came, and he wanted to familiarize himself with the place and get the right course leading out.

The night stole on. The captain had retired, and one by one the others dropped off, leaving the prisoner and his guards alone. The lights began to burn dimly. Only the heavy respiration of the sleepers, or an occasional question drawn out by one of the guards, broke the silence of the place, when, suddenly, a deep, startling sound came crashing through the cavern from the main entrance. It started the guards and aroused the sleepers!

It was the deep bay of a dog, and the old borderman's mind at once reverted to Happy Harry and his faithful companion, Belshazzar. A feeling of hope took possession of his breast, but as he saw the men hurrying from their couches all vanished again. What meant the noise? Was Happy Harry coming to his assistance? Had the youth seen him drawn into the trap of the enemy?

The bay of the animal again echoed through the hollow chambers of the great vault.

"This way, this way, some of you!" called out the man who stood guard near the entrance of the passage.

Three or four men, one of them carrying a lantern, hastened down to the water's edge.

"What is it, Hoover?"

"Look and tell me yourself, if you can," answered the guard.

The man held his lantern high above his head. The light streamed out upon the water. He saw that the water was agitated—little

waves were chafing the walls of the cavern. Something dark was in the water—something possessed of life—struggling slowly and laboriously toward them.

"Well, what is it, anyhow?"

All stood speechless with wonderment. No one could answer, for no one knew. All saw a black mass struggling in the channel, but the faint gleam of the lantern's light was not strong enough to reveal its outlines.

"It's a bear!" one of the men finally ventured to assert.

The whole party recoiled with an involuntary start.

The object came nearer and assumed a more tangible form.

"By heavens, it's a big dog!" exclaimed the man with the lantern.

"It is, for a fact," affirmed the others.

"But what's he got in his mouth? What's that he's draggin' this way through the water?"

"Merciful Moses! it's a person!—a human—dead!—drowned!"

The man saw aright. The black object was a dog—it was Belshazzar. And he was dragging a human body through the shallow water toward them! It was the body of his young master, Happy Harry!

With bated breath, and wonder written upon every feature, the neutrals watched the animal. He dragged the body along, making desperate efforts to keep it out of the water. He soon came within reach of where the men stood, then one of them stooped down and pulled the body ashore.

"Hold the lantern here, Victor."

Victor held the lantern close to the face of the dead.

"I declare, it's a boy, and he's dead as a door-nail."

Harry's eyes were closed, his teeth set, his hair wet and dragged. A death-like pallor was upon his young, boyish face. In one hand was clasped, in a vise-like grip, a broken bow. One of the men attempted to remove it, but failed.

"It's fast," he said, "in the icy grip of death. And that's what's killed the little feller. He's been climbing along the rocks, and that bow has broke and let him fall."

Belshazzar came out of the water, shook the wet from his shaggy form, then advanced to the side of his young master and gazed down into his face with an almost human intelligence. Then he seated himself upon his haunches, and looking back into the black, dismal cavern, howled at the black, sullen waves.

#### CHAPTER VIII.

##### HARRY ON HIS WITS.

"HE must have been a friend of that big White Bear," said one of the men, as they stood mutely around the motionless form of the boy.

And this was the conclusion that they all came to.

"Is he dead?" asked Captain Kale, coming up at this juncture.

"Deader'n the Prophets."

Kale stooped and felt his pulse.

"He is not dead," he exclaimed; "he has a strong pulse. Carry him up to the room and we'll pump the water out of him and give him a strong stimulant."

Two men stooped to lift the youth in their arms, when the dog disputed their right to the body; but, after some coaxing, they succeeded in convincing the animal of their friendly intentions, and were permitted to move the body, though the faithful mastiff followed close behind the two men.

They placed the youth on a couch, not far from where Long Beard sat in bonds.



They lay upon the cavern floor, where he had sat.

The whole band was aroused, and in a moment all were hurrying through the cavern. Captain Kirby Kale brought up the rear. Curses fell from his lips and rage darkened his brow.

"Take it easy, gov'nir; it's the best way; it is, by a sacred fact," said a pleasant voice near him.

Kale turned, and to his surprise saw Happy Harry reclining on his elbow on the ground. A mischievous, comic smile—the natural expression of the boy's countenance—was upon his face. He manifested no alarm nor curiosity concerning his whereabouts, but seemed perfectly indifferent to his situation.

And so skillfully, boldly and shrewdly had he played his part in liberating Long Beard, that the captain mistrusted nothing of the truth. He turned short upon the boy, and in a tone expressing his surprise, exclaimed:

"Why, lad, I thought you were dead!"

"Dead?" reiterated Harry; "well, s'pose I had been; a dead nigger couldn't rest in this place for the confounded noise. What all them tattered-donkey ruffin' down there like mad? Where am I, gov'nir?"

"Do you remember where you were last?" asked Kale.

"I've a faint sprinklin' of an idea," replied the youth, scratching his head reflectively. "I think I was scramblin' long a ledge over lookin' a bay of Lake St. Clair, tryin' to git to a hawk's nest, when my foot slipped and I careened handsomely over into the water. And about this time—while I war fallin' and while mussin' around in the water—I tried to think of so many things at once that my brain couldn't hold 'em, and so I didn't think of anythin'. As to where I am, I can't say whether I'm on earth, or in the regions of darkness presided over by Satan. Strikes me them fellows ruffin' down there are a legion ofimps the way they beller. And—?" he sniffed the air like a hound—"strikes me I smell brimstone."

Kirby Kale indulged in an outburst of laughter.

"Who are you, boy?" he asked.

"I used to be called Happy Harry, the Wild Boy, when I lived on earth, and made a business of huntin' squirrels and robbin' birds' nests. I s'pose this is the hunter's corner of perdition, eh?"

At this juncture a man came up with the information that Long Beard had escaped.

Kale swore with impotent rage, and even threatened the guards with violence.

Happy Harry suddenly caught a glimpse of the man with the bandage on his head. It was the traitor, Bill Mucklewee—he who had betrayed Captain Rankin into the hands of the savages. But the villain kept aloof from him as if to keep his identity concealed.

Daylight finally came outside, but darkness remained in the cavern. The lanterns had to be kept burning both night and day. Food already prepared was served out to the band. Harry partook heartily and made himself at home among the strangers and enemies. In a short time all the men with the exception of Mucklewee became greatly attached to the young waif and his huge canine friend. His flushed, joyous face and sparkling eyes, and his rollicking spirit, broke like a flood of sunlight into their dark retreat and its dismal, monotonous life.

Captain Kale questioned Harry closely about the rumored war with England, Long Beard, and many other things, all of which the youth evaded in such a careful manner that he left the captain no wiser, and without having his suspicions aroused.

Harry and his dog were given the liberty of the cavern. The youth could have escaped, but he was not ready yet. He was anxious to know what the band was doing there. He could not believe they were the lake pirates of whom Long Beard had spoken, and yet he was fully convinced that it was a party whose movements were made under cover of night, as it were. And of this he satisfied himself fully. During the day he sauntered about the cavern, looking boldly into the niches and corners of the place with a listless, boyish curiosity not calculated to provoke mistrust. To his surprise he caught the glimpses of several suits of clothing laid away in one place and another which he recognized as the uniforms of British infantry. This discovery left no doubt in his mind as to who and what the band was—a company of His Majesty's troops that had stolen across the line from Canada and ambushed themselves in the cavern. But, what their object could have been in so doing, and in concealing their military insignia beneath the garb of civilians, was beyond our hero's comprehension. But he mentally resolved to know, now that he was in their midst.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 301.)

## Erminie:

### THE GIPSY QUEEN'S VOW.

BY MRS. MAY AGNES FLEMING,  
AUTHOR OF "THE DARK SECRET," "AN AW-  
FUL MYSTERY," "VICTORIA," ETC., ETC.

#### CHAPTER XXV.

##### MR. TOOSYPEGGS IN DISTRESS.

"Ah, me! for aught that I could ever read,  
Could ever hear by tale or history,  
The course of true love never did run smooth."  
—SHAKESPEARE.

"ADMIRAL HAVENFUL, it's kind of you to ask, but I ain't well at all; I'm very much obliged to you," said Mr. Toosypeggs, in a deeply dejected voice, as he walked into the parlor of the White Squall and took his seat without ever raising his eyes from the floor.

"Stand from under!" growled the admiral, in a tone like a bear with the bronchitis, as he gave his glazed hat a slap down on his head, and looked in a bewildered sort of way at the melancholy face of Mr. O. C. Toosypeggs.

"Admiral Havenful, it's my intention to stand from under as much as possible," said Mr. Toosypeggs, mournfully; "but, at the same time, I'm just as miserable as ever I can be, thank you. I don't see what I was born for at all, either. I dare say they meant well about it; but at the same time, I don't see what I was born for," said Mr. Toosypeggs, with increased mournfulness.

The admiral laid both hands on his knees, and leaning over, looked solemnly into Mr. Toosypeggs' face. Reading no expression whatever in that "Book of Beauty" but the mildest sort of despair, he drew himself up again, and grunted out an adjuration to "heave ahead."

"Admiral Havenful, would you oblige me by not saying that again?" said Mr. Toosypeggs, giving a sudden start, and keeping his hand to his stomach with a grimace of intense disgust. "You mean real well, I know; but it recalls unpleasant recollections that I

wish buried in oblivion. Ugh!" said Mr. Toosypeggs, with a convulsive shudder.

The admiral looked appealingly at the great painting on the mantel; but as that offered no suggestion, he took off his hat, gave his wig a vigorous scratching, as if to extract a few ideas by the roots, and then clapping it on again, faced around, and with renewed vigor began the attack.

"Now, Mr. Toosypeggs, I'm considerable out of my latitude, and if you'll just keep her round a point or so, I'll be able to see my way clearer, and discover in which corner the wind sits. What's the trouble, young man?"

"The trouble, Admiral Havenful, is such that no amount of words can ever express it. No, Admiral Havenful!" exclaimed the unhappy Mr. Toosypeggs, "all the words in all the dictionaries, not to mention the spelling books, that ever was printed, couldn't begin to tell you the way I feel. It worries me so, and preys on my mind at such a rate that my appetite ain't no circumstance to what it used to be. My Sunday swallow-tails (the one with the brass buttons, Admiral Havenful), that used to barely meet on me, goes clean around me twice, now. I don't expect to live long at this rate, but I guess it's pleasantest laying in the graveyard than living in this vale of tears," added Mr. Toosypeggs, with a melancholy snuffle.

Once again the perplexed admiral looked helplessly at the picture; but the work of art maintained a strict neutrality, and gave him not the slightest assistance. Then he glanced at Mr. Toosypeggs, but still nothing was to be read in those pallid, freckled features, but the mildest sort of anguish. The admiral was beginning to lose patience.

"Belay there! belay!" he roared, bringing his fist down with a tremendous thud on his unoffending knee. "Come to the point at once, Orlando Toosypeggs! What the dickens is the matter?"

"Admiral Havenful, don't swear!" exclaimed Mr. Toosypeggs, looking deeply scandalized. "I dare say you mean well; but profane swearing isn't so edifying as it might be. I've a little tract at home that tells about a boy that told another boy to 'go to blazes' and three years after he fell out of a fourth-story window and broke two of his legs, and some of his arms. That shows the way profane swearing is punished. I'll bring you over the book some day, Admiral Havenful, if you like; it's a very interesting story to read about."

The admiral fell back with a groan. "I haven't read anything lately but the 'Lamentations of Jeremiah,'" said Mr. Toosypeggs, resuming his former objections; "it's very soothing to the feelings, though I can't lay it to heart so much as I would like to, on account of Aunt Priscilla scolding all the time. She means real well, I know, but it ain't so pleasant to listen to as some things I've heard. I laid awake all last night crying, but it don't seem to do me much good."

And Mr. Toosypeggs wiped his eyes with his handkerchief. The admiral said nothing; he had evidently given up the point in despair. "I wouldn't mention this to anybody but you, Admiral Havenful," said Mr. Toosypeggs; "because my feelings are so dreadfully lacerated it's a great affliction to me to speak of it. I know you won't tell anybody that I've revealed it, because I would feel real bad about it if you did."

"Orlando Toosypeggs, just stand by a minute, will you?" said the admiral, in the tone of a patient but persecuted saint. "Now, hold on—what have you revealed to me? What have you told me? There's two questions I'd feel obliged to anybody to answer."

"Why, my goodness!" said Mr. Toosypeggs, in much surprise, "haven't I told you? Why, I thought I had. Well, then, Admiral Havenful, I've went and fell in love, and that's all about it."

"Maintain sail haul!" roared the admiral, immeasurably relieved; "who'd ever have thought it! Who is she, Orlando?" said the admiral, lowering his voice to a husky whisper.

"Your niece, Miss Pet Lawless," said Mr. Toosypeggs, blushing deeply.

This announcement took the admiral so much by surprise that he could only give vent to it by another appealing glance at the picture, and a stifled growl of "Splice the mainbrace!"

"Admiral Havenful, it's my intention to splice the main-brace as much as possible. I'm very much obliged to you," said Mr. Toosypeggs, gratefully, "but, at the same time, I'm afraid it won't do me the least good. I know very well she don't care anything about me, and will go and marry somebody else some day. By gracious!" exclaimed Mr. Toosypeggs, with the energy of desperation, "I've a good mind to go and do something to myself, whenever I think of it. Why, it's enough to make a fellow go and heave himself away into an untimely grave—so it is."

"Don't, Orlando, don't," said the admiral, in a tone of grave rebuke; "it's not proper to talk so. When you come to overhaul your conscience, by-and-by, you'll be sorry for such rash threats. Now, look here—I'm going to talk to you for your own good. Does Pet know you've gone and splashed your affections onto her?"

"Good gracious, no!" ejaculated Mr. Toosypeggs, in much alarm; "I wouldn't tell her for anything—no, not for any amount of money you could give me for doing it, Admiral Havenful. Oh, my goodness! the idea! why, she would laugh at me, Admiral Havenful."

"Avast there, messmate! avast!" growled the admiral, administering a thump to his glazed hat. "Now, look here. When a young man goes and falls into love with a young woman, what does he do; or, what do they do?"

"I'm sure I don't know, Admiral Havenful," said Mr. Toosypeggs, looking dejectedly at the carpet; "I never was in love before, you know, and it's just the queerest feeling ever was. I never experienced anything like it before. It's not like the colic, or the toothache, or a cramp, or anything; you feel—well, I don't know as I can describe it; but you kind of feel all over. And whenever I meet Miss Pet suddenly and she turns them two great, black eyes of hers right onto me—my gracious! Admiral Havenful, the state it sets me into! Why, I actually feel as if I'd like to crawl out of the toes of my boots, or have the carpet open and swallow me up."

And, Mr. Toosypeggs, carried away by the exciting recollection, got up and paced up and down two or three times, and then dropped back into his seat and began wiping his heated visage with the flaming bandanna so often spoken of.

"Belay! belay!" said the admiral, impatiently; "you're steering in the wrong direction altogether, Orlando. Now, look here; I asked you, 'when a young man goes and falls in love with a young woman, what does he do?' and says you 'I don't know, Admiral Havenful.' Well, now, look here; I'll tell you.

When a young man goes and falls in love with a young woman, what does he do? Why, Orlando Toosypeggs, he goes and marries her! That's what he does!"

And hereupon the admiral administered another vigorous slap to his glazed hat, that very nearly stove in the crown of that ill-used head-piece; and leaning back in his chair, looked with exultant triumph and exultation at Mr. Toosypeggs.

That young gentleman gave a sudden start, such as people are in the habit of giving when they sit on a tin tack turned up, and got very red, but did not reply.

"Now, look here, Orlando Toosypeggs," reiterated the admiral, bringing the forefinger of his right hand impressively down on the palm of his left, "they goes and gets married. That's what they does."

Mr. Toosypeggs gave another start, which could only be justified by the idea of another upturned tin tack, and blushed deeper than ever, but still replied never a word.

"They goes and gets married. That there's what they does," repeated the admiral, folding his arms and leaning serenely back, like a man who has settled the matter forever. "And now, Orlando Toosypeggs, in the words of Scripture,—here the admiral got up and took off his glazed hat—"go thou, and do likewise."

And then clapping his hat on again, with a triumphant slap, he sat down and looked Mr. Toosypeggs straight and unwinkingly in the face.

"Admiral Havenful, I'm very much obliged to you, I'm sure," said the "lover," in a subdued tone; "but—maybe she wouldn't have me. She might, just as likely as not, say 'No,' Admiral Havenful."

This was a view of the case the admiral had never once taken, and it took him so completely "aback" to use his own phrase, that he could only cast another appealing glance at the picture and growl a low, bewildered adjuration to society in general, to "Stand from under!"

"I shouldn't be a bit surprised if she said 'No,' Admiral Havenful; not one bit, sir," said Mr. Toosypeggs, mournfully; "it's my luck, always, to have the most dreadful things happen to me! I declare it's enough to make a fellow mad enough to go and do something to himself—it actually is."

"Don't now, Orlando, don't now," said the admiral, severely; "it isn't proper, you know, and you really shouldn't. There's a proverb I'm trying to think of," said the admiral, knitting his brow in intense perplexity; "you know the Book of Proverbs, Orlando, don't you? Hold on, now, till I see: 'Fain'—no—yes, 'Fain heart—fain heart never won a fair lady.' Again the old sailor reverential removed his hat. "That's it, Orlando; 'fain heart never won fair lady.' Now, look here; you go straight along and ask Firefly if she's willing to cruise under your flag through life, and if she lays her hand in yours, and says 'I'm there, messmate,' by St. Paul Jones! we'll have such a wedding as never was seen in old Maryland since Calvert came over. Hoora!" yelled the admiral, waving his hat over his head in an unexpected outburst of delight, that quite startled Mr. Toosypeggs.

"Admiral Havenful, I'll do it! I will, by gracious!" exclaimed Mr. Toosypeggs, jumping up in the excitement of the moment. "I'll go right straight over to Heath Hill and ask her. Why, she actually might say 'Yes,' after all. What will aunt Priscilla say? Admiral Havenful, it was real kind of you to advise me so, and tell me what to do, and I'm ever so much obliged to you—I really am," said Mr. Toosypeggs, bustling around, and putting on his hat, and turning to go.

"Keep her to the wind's eye!" roared the admiral, in a burst of enthusiasm, as he brought out a tremendous sledge-hammer flung down with an awful thump on the table.

"Admiral Havenful, it is my intention to keep her to the wind's eye as much as possible," said Mr. Toosypeggs, who comprehended the sentence about as much as he would a Chinese funeral-oration. "Good-by, now; I'll come right back when it's over, and tell you what she said."

And like the frog immortalized in Mother Goose, who would a-wooing go, Mr. O. C. Toosypeggs "set to with his opera-hat," on that expedition so terrifying to bashful young men—that of going to "pop the question."

#### CHAPTER XXVI.

##### PET "RESPECTFULLY DECLINES."

"Doubt the stars are fire—  
Doubt the sun doth move—  
Doubt truth to be a liar,  
But never doubt I love." —HAMLET.

In all the ardor of his momentary excitement Mr. Toosypeggs got astride of a serious-looking pony, a family relation of the admiral's favorite nag, Ringbone, and set out at a shuffling gallop for Heath Hill. Mr. Toosypeggs did not look quite so pretty on horseback as some people might suppose; for he went jiggling up and down with every motion of his sides, and being remarkably long in the legs, his feet were never more than a few inches from the ground; so that, altogether, he was not the most dashing rider you would have selected to lead a charge of cavalry. But Mr. Toosypeggs was not thinking of his looks just then, but of a far more important subject—trying to screw his courage to the sticking-point. The further he went, the faster his new-found courage began oozing away. As the White Squall receded, so did his daring determination; and as the full extent of the mission he was on burst upon him, a cold perspiration slowly burst out on his face, despite the warmth of the day.

"Good gracious! it's going to be awful; I know it is!" exclaimed Mr. Toosypeggs, wiping his face with the cuff of his coat. "And how I'm ever going to get through with it, I'm sure I don't know. I wish to goodness I had never said nothing about it! If I only knew any man that's in the habit of proposing, he could tell me how they do it, and then I wouldn't mind. But now—by gracious! I've a good mind to turn, and go right back to Dismal Hollow. But then, the admiral—what will he say? Well, I don't care what he says. How would he like to go and pop the question himself, I wonder? By gracious! I will go back. It's no use thinking about it; for I'd sooner be chawed alive by rattlesnakes, and then kicked to death by grasshoppers, than go and tell Miss Pet the way I feel. I couldn't tell her the way I feel; it's the most peculiar sensation ever was. And then black eyes of hers! Land of hope and blessed promise! the way they do go right through a fellow's vest pattern! How in the world so many men can manage to get married is more than I know; for I'd sooner march up to the muzzle of a pistol while Old Nick held the trigger, than go and do it! Whoa, Charlie! Turn round. I'm going home to Dismal Hollow!"

Whir, whir, whir! came something, with lightning-like rapidity, over the soft heath.

Mr. Toosypeggs turned round; and there came Miss Pet herself, flying along like the wind, on her fleet Arabian, her cheeks crimson, her splendid eyes blazing, her red lips smiling; her short, jetty curls flying in the wind she herself raised; her long, raven-black plume just touching her scarlet cheeks; the red rings of flame flashing out in the sunlight from her dazzling eyes and hair. She was bewildering, dazzling, blinding! Mr. Toosypeggs had his breath completely taken away, as his heart had long since been, and in that moment fell more deeply, deplorably, and helplessly in love than ever. Every idea was instantaneously put to flight by this little dark, bright bird-of-paradise—this blinding little grenade, all fire, and jets, and sparkles.

"Halloo, Orlando! Your very humble servant!" shouted Pet, as she laughingly dashed up, touching her hat gallantly to the gentleman. "How does your imperial highness find yourself this glorious day?"

"A—pretty miserable, thank you. A—I mean I ain't very well, Miss Pet," said Mr. Toosypeggs, stammering, and breaking down.

"Not very well, eh? Why, what's the matter? Not cholera-morbus, or measles, or a galloping decline, or anything—is it?" said Pet, in a tone of deepest anxiety. "The gods forbid anything should happen to you, Orlando, for the sake of all Judestown girls whose hearts you have broken! You do look sort of blue—a prey to 'green and yellow melancholy,' I shouldn't wonder! Make Miss Priscilla apply a mustard-poultice when you get home—it doesn't matter where—and go to bed with your feet in a tub of hot water, and I'll bet you anything you'll be as well as ever, if not considerably better, in the morning. I'm going to take in nursing some of these days, and ought to know!"

"Miss Pet, it's real good of you to advise me, and I'm very much obliged to you," said Mr. Toosypeggs, gratefully; "but, at the same time, I don't believe mustard-poultices and tubs of hot water would do me the first mite of good. No, Miss Pet, not all the hot water in all the hot springs that ever was, could do me the least good," said Mr. Toosypeggs, firmly. "I'm in that state that nothing can do me any good—no, no, nothing!" repeated Mr. Toosypeggs, with increased firmness. "It's all internal, you see, Miss Pet."

"Oh! is it?" said Pet, puckering up her mouth as if she was going to whistle. "You ought to take something, then, and drive it out! Hot gin, or burnt brandy and cayenne is good—excessively good—though not so nice to take as some things I've tasted. Just you take a pint or so of hot burnt brandy and cayenne to-night, before going to bed, and you'll see it will be all out in a severe rash early tomorrow morning. I'm advising you for your good, Orlando; for I feel like a mother to you—in fact, I feel a motherly interest in all the nice young men in Judestown and the surrounding country generally, for any extent you please, and am always ready to give them no end of good advice, if they only take it."

"It's real good of you, Miss Pet, I'm sure," said Mr. Toosypeggs, winking, as the very thought of the hot brandy and cayenne brought tears to his eyes, "and I would be real glad to take your advice, and brandy, only what ails me can't be brought out in a rash. No, Miss Pet, all the brandy from here to Brandywine," said Mr. Toosypeggs—with a hazy idea that all ardent spirits came from that place—"couldn't do it. It's real good of you, though, to recommend it; and I'm very much obliged to you, I'm sure."

"Well, really, I'm afraid I'll have to give the case up, though I hate to do it. What's the symptoms, Orlando?"

"The what, Miss Pet?"

"The symptoms, you know—I don't exactly understand the word myself, and I forgot my dictionary when I was coming away. It means, though, the feelings or something that way—how do you feel as a general thing?"

"Well, I can't say I feel very well," said Mr. Toosypeggs, mournfully. "I'm sort of restless, and can't sleep of nights."

"Ah! that's owing to the musketoes!" said Pet. "That ain't dangerous. Go on."

"No, Miss Pet, it's not the musketoes; it's my feelings," said Mr. Toosypeggs, with increased mournfulness. "I've lost my appetite!"

"Well, I'm sure I don't wonder at that, either," again interrupted Pet. "Miss Priscilla has starved you over there—I know she does. Just you come over and dine with us two or three times a week, at Heath Hill, and you'll be astonished slightly at the way you'll find your appetite again. Oh, I don't despair of you at all!"

"Miss Pet," burst out Mr. Toosypeggs, in a sort of desperation, "it's very good of you to ask me, and I'm very much obliged to you; but you don't understand my feelings at all. It's an unfortunate attachment—"

"An attachment?" exclaimed Pet. "Whew! that is bad. Why, Orlando, I didn't think you owed anybody anything. When was this attachment issued against you?"

"Oh, Miss Pet, can't you understand? My gracious! that ain't the sort of attachment I mean at all. It's not legal."

"Then it's illegal," said Miss Pet, with a profoundly-shocked expression of countenance. "Why, Mr. Toosypeggs, where do you expect to go to? I never expected to have any such confession from your lips. An illegal attachment! Mr. Toosypeggs, the community generally look upon you as a highly exemplary young man, but I feel it my painful duty to announce to them immediately how they have been deceived. An illegal attachment! Oh, my stars and garters! Excuse me, Mr. Toosypeggs, but after such a highly improper confession, I must bid you good-morning. No young and unsuspecting female like me can be seen with propriety in your company for the future. I am very sorry, Mr. Toosypeggs, and I should never have suspected you of such shocking conduct had you not confessed it yourself." And Pet drew herself up, and put on that severely-moral expression only seen on the faces of school-mistresses and committeemen when lecturing young ideas on the proper way to shoot.

"Good gracious!" exclaimed Mr. Toosypeggs, in a distracted tone, nearly driven out of his senses by this harangue. "Oh, land of hope! was a fellow that never done nothing to nobody ever talked to like this before! By gracious! it's enough to make a fellow get as mad as anything; so it is! Why, Miss Pet, I haven't done anything improper—I wouldn't for any price; upon my word and honor, I wouldn't. I've fell in love with—a—with a young lady, and I don't see where's the harm of it. It's unkind of you, Miss Pet, to speak so, and I don't see what I've ever done to deserve it. You mean real well, I'm sure, but it makes a fellow feel bad to be talked to in this way all the time," said Mr. Toosypeggs, with a stifled whimper.

"Well, there, don't cry, Orlando," said Pet, soothingly, "and I won't say another word. What young lady have you had the misfortune to fall in love with?"

"Miss Pet, excuse me, but I—I'd rather not tell, if it's all the same," replied Mr. Toosypeggs, blushing deeply.

"Oh, fool! tell me, as a friend, you know. Won't ever mention it again, so help me! Do I know her?"

"Ye—yes, Miss Pet, slightly."

"Hem! It isn't Annie Grove?"

"No, Miss Pet—why, she's forty years old, if she's a day," said Mr. Toosypeggs, indignantly.

"Yes, I know—twenty-five, she says; but she's been that as far back as the oldest inhabitant can remember. Well, then, Jessie Masters?"

"Miss Pet, allow me to say I ain't in the habit of falling in love with women with wooden legs," said the young gentleman, with dignity. "Well, I didn't know; it's cheaper, in shoe-leather, especially. Hem-m-m! Perhaps it's Mrs. Jenkins?"

"Mrs. Jenkins! a widow! No, Miss Pet, it ain't. I should think you might know I don't like second-hand women," said Mr. Toosypeggs, as near being indignant as he ever was in his life.

"Well, who the mischief can it be then? It must be Hulda Rice."

"A little stout thing, with—a hump, and cross-eyes? Miss Pet, it ain't!" exclaimed Mr. Toosypeggs, with tears of vexation in his eyes.

"Not her, either! then I give up. Who is it, Orlando?"

"Miss Pet, I don't like to tell—you'll laugh at me," said Mr. Toosypeggs, blushing deeply.

"Laugh! No! I won't; honor bright! I'll look as grim as a death's-head and cross-bones! Now then, out with it!"

"Miss Pet, it's—it's—"

"Yes—well?"

"It's—"

"Well?"

"It's you," fairly shouted Mr. Toosypeggs, driven to desperation by her perseverance. "Me! O ye gods and goddesses, without skirts or bodices! Me! Great Jehosaphat! I'll know what it feels like to be unexpectedly struck by a cannon-ball, after this! Me! Well, I never!"

"Miss Pet, I knew you would laugh; I knew it all along, and I told him so this morning," said Mr. Toosypeggs, with a snuff; "you mean well, I dare say, but it don't seem kind at all." "Laugh!" exclaimed Pet; "come, I like that, and my face as long as an undertaker's! You may take a microscope and look from this until the week after next, and then you won't discover the ghost of a smile on my countenance. Laugh, indeed! I'm above such a weakness, I hope," said Pet, with ineffable contempt.

"Then, Miss Pet, perhaps you will have me," said Mr. Toosypeggs, with sudden hope. "Miss Pet, I can't begin to tell you the way I love you; you can't have any idea of it; it goes right through and through me. I think of you all day, and I dream about you all night. I'm in the most dreadful way about you, ever was. Miss Pet, I'd do anything you told me to. I'd go and drown myself if you wanted me to, or shoot myself, or take ratsbane, and rather like it than otherwise, if you'll only have me, Miss Pet—"

"Orlando, I'm very sorry; but—I can't."

"Miss Pet, you don't mean it; you can't mean it, surely. I know I ain't so good-looking as some," said Mr. Toosypeggs, in a melancholy tone; "but I can get something to take the freckles off, and I expect to fatten out a little, by-and-by, so—"

"Now, don't go to any such trouble for me," said Pet, with difficulty keeping from laughing at his mildly-anguished look. "I don't mind the freckles at all; I rather like them, in fact; they vary the monotony of the complexion, just as cases do in the deserts we read of; and, as for being thin—well, I'm rather on the hatch-et-pattern myself, you know. But you must quit thinking about me, Orlando, because I'm only a wild little Tomboy, that everybody gets furious about, and I never intend to get married at all—that is, unless—well, never mind."

"Miss Pet, if you only knew how badly in love I am."

"Oh, you only think so; you'll forget me in a week!"

"I'll never forget you, Miss Pet, never—not even if I was to be taken out of this world altogether, and sent up to New Jersey. It's awful to think you won't have me—it really is," said Mr. Toosypeggs, in great mental distress.

"Well, I'm sorry, Orlando, but I can't help it, you know. Now be a good boy for my sake, and try to forget me—won't you?" asked Pet, coaxingly.

"I'll try to, Miss Pet, since you wish it," said poor Mr. Toosypeggs, with tears in his eyes; "but it's blamed hard. I wish to gracious I had never been born—I just do! I don't see where is the good of it at all."

"Oh, now, Orlando, you mustn't feel bad about it, because it won't amount to anything," said Pet, in a consoling tone; "don't let us talk any more about it. Guess what I heard last night over at Judestown."

"I'm sure I don't know, Miss Pet," said Mr. Toosypeggs, giving his eyes and nose a vigorous wiping with his handkerchief.



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## Sunshine Papers.

### The Spirit of Fuss.

"Oh! Maggie, dearest!"  
"Maggie dearest!" sat before the cheery grate fire, in the hotel parlor, slowly buttoning her white gloves and engaging in a pleasant conversation with a gloved and overcoated gentleman near. She was sweet of face, calm of manner, low-voiced; and the person whose salutation preceded her in loud, hurried tones, as she burst into the salon, must have set Maggie's nerves sadly ajar.

"Dear! dear! have I kept you waiting? But you will pardon me, my pet? And have you been shockingly lonely?"  
Maggie responded to the hurried sentences by presenting the gentleman, and avowing the time had passed most pleasantly, and assured her friend that it was not in the least late. Then the bustling lady crowded expressions of delight at the gentleman's arrival, a significance that she was ready to depart, an announcement that she had forgotten her tickets, a countermand of that announcement, a fruitless search for the precious little articles, a re-announcement of her forgetfulness, a declaration that earth held no allurements sufficiently attractive to deter her from seeing the drama that night to be played—all into sixty seconds; and ended by whisking up stairs after the missing papers of admittance.

"Maggie dearest" and the gentleman caller had barely time to recover themselves with a long breath when the personified Spirit of Fuss was back. This time she must stay to put on her gloves, and entangle herself in the gentleman's call. Before her blunder was made clear to her she had discovered that she must take a wrap and was violently summoning a waiter. Her orders as to where he would find the garment were remarkably vague; and by the time he disappeared in the hall above she remembered she had told him altogether wrong and had left the cloak in the room of a friend, and vanished in pursuit of him, leaving her companions, evidently, possessed of unspeakable emotions.

When she made her third appearance in the parlor her friends managed to convey her toward the door, while she, in one breath, was hoping they wouldn't be late, their seats would prove good ones, that it would not rain, and expressing her unbounded delight that the gentleman was to enjoy the play with them—though he, poor man, had not the most remote idea of further attendance than to escort them to an omnibus, ere he returned to the sick-room of his wife.

It has been a matter of mournful meditation, since, whether the sick wife received as patient and devoted attentions from her spouse that particular evening as he was wont to accord her. It would not be surprising if she did not. However, in all fairness to him, and as a valuable warning to his wife, it is a pity that some one could not have explained to her how trying an ordeal to nerves and temper her husband had been forced to endure. When she realized that that ordeal was the result of a diabolical tendency on the part of her own sex to indulge in a spirit of fuss, that is torturing to nerves and ruinous to good temper, she certainly would have overlooked all omissions or commissions on his part.

It is strange how many women bustle about like small whirlwinds, talk as if impelled by some inward machinery that once wound could not cease, and act like non-reasoning creatures generally. It certainly is a spirit to be deprecated—the spirit of fuss. If women would but study its workings they would find that, in no small degree, it proves the leaven which, permeating a series of small household discomforts, poisons at last the vitality of many marital relations.

There are few men who can endure fuss. When the husband comes tired from business, to find rest at home, there are no circumstances more annoying than the ways of a fussy woman. Bustle, restless, nervous, and noisy manners, suggestions of inopportune matters, needless reiterations of domestic troubles and personal grievances, unnecessary ado over trifles, and unreasonable demands and unsystematic ways are, in the aggregate, an intense aggravation to most members of the masculine sex.

Many women seem imbued with the erroneous idea that a fussy person must be a good housekeeper. It is as easy for the wife to have all domestic matters reduced to as systematic a routine as that with which her husband conducts his business; and to a sensible woman would be imperative. The best housekeepers are those with whom a spirit of fuss is foreign; who manage all matters in a quiet, common-sense way, and render home, or any place pervaded by their presence, calm, pleasant and useful.

Another reason why women should study to be gentle and quietly self-possessed, in all their manners and under all circumstances, is that the spirit of fuss is distinctively vulgar. A thoroughly well-bred woman will seldom allow herself, under ever so startling circumstances, to be surprised out of her ordinary repose and self-command. The people of the middle classes in monarchies, and the people of all classes in our own republic, might profitably imitate the manners of the nobility in this one particular. There is nothing of which a titled personage has more horror than a scene, or to be conspicuous. And there are few lessons that women can learn which will, in the course of a lifetime, conduce so much to the comfort of others, and make their own lives successful, as quiet manners and absolute self-control—both bitter enemies to the vulgar and annoying spirit of fuss.

A PARSON'S DAUGHTER.

### DRESS.

I don't know how it is that persons, who are continually pleading poverty and bitterly complaining because times are so hard, busi-

ness so dull, and cash so scarce, manage to dress so well and have just such articles as they desire, but I do know that they do so. Not long since I was called upon to sympathize with a neighbor who was very abusive of the times because she had such a hard struggle to make her way. She wanted all the condolence I had to spare, and that I freely gave her. And the very next day she purchased a new dress, and not a very cheap one, either. I met her not a great while afterward and she told me that she had passed many a sleepless night in worrying how she was to procure the coveted article, when it suddenly occurred to her that she might run in debt for it.

I then thought that there have been more sleepless nights caused by this worrying as to how we shall procure new clothes than there ever have been in thinking how we are to pay for the same. And I have not altered my opinion, as yet. "Charge it," are simple words to say, and bear but little meaning to us. "Pay it" are stern realities, and sometimes make one quiver. I think that going into debt for superfluities is exceedingly wrong, and oftentimes sinful.

How much one will sacrifice for dress, and dress of no mean quality, either! How many desire to appear as well-dressed, if not better dressed, than their neighbors without being able to gratify their desires, yet will cut and contrive, pinch and scrape, until their wishes are accomplished!

I know of one woman with a large family of children who works out a great deal, and all the money she receives she lays out in dress for herself, while the poor little ones crawl around the room with scarcely enough to cover their bare limbs, and, in winter, these poor neglected children go to bed to keep warm, for no fire is allowed them. The heat must be denied them to gratify the mother's love of dress. The father provides for the house, but the children must pick up what is given them to wear. This is one of the rare exceptions—Heaven be thanked that it is rare—where a mother neglects her children to bedeck herself!

How the following old couplet runs in my head:

"Fond pride of dress is sure a very curse,  
Ere fancy you consult, consult your purse."

If every one were to consult their purse before they purchased their dresses these same dresses would be less expensive and just as neat. I don't want every one to deprive themselves of the good things to wear, for those who can afford the silks and satins are justly entitled to them, and it gives the sewing-girls and working-women employment. But, when a person is poor, how utterly wrong it is for her to ape the fashions of the wealthy when she knows, or should know, very well that she cannot afford the outfit.

I don't mean to imply that because a person is poor she should go about looking like a dowdy and sloven. There is no need of that; but when a woman has fifteen to twenty yards of ruffling on her clothes, and her children are in want of decent wearing apparel, it seems to me that it looks foolish for the woman and is cruelty toward the children. Such mothers are not often found, and glad enough am I that they are not.

I know another mother who sees first to the comfort of her brood before she gives a care to herself—who will wear old shoes that her daughter may have the new pair, and she utters no complaint in doing so. She is a self-sacrificing woman and a true and noble mother.

Could you take comfort in wearing expensive clothes when you knew others of your blood were suffering for necessary articles to cover their limbs? I couldn't, and I wouldn't! I'd have the nightmare in my sleeping hours, and be a prey to conscience in my waking ones.

When there are so many homeless ones wanting shelter—so many hungry mouths wanting food—does it not seem almost wicked for people to spend so much time and money upon dresses for self?

Oh, brothers and sisters, live and work for others beside yourselves!

Dress more plainly and less extravagantly so that your less fortunate kindred may have decent things to wear. If you live for others more than for self God will reward you. What higher or better reward could you wish for?

EVE LAWLESS.

### MATERNAL DECEPTION.

EVER since Rebecca, the prime actor in maternal deception, played off her successful plot upon her blind and aged husband, the patriarch Isaac, the world has not been destitute of mothers who intrigue with their sons against the husband and the father. Sometimes the plot is to secure a greater portion of the paternal estate for a favorite son; but more frequently in matters of smaller amounts. The son wants more money to spend than the father is willing to furnish, and the mother plots to obtain it. She may honestly think the father is too close-fisted with the boy, and does not give him the amount which true paternal regard would dictate; and so, impelled by her maternal love, she seeks to make up the deficiency by some scheme which will outwit the father and get the money out of him by deception.

Such a course is detrimental in the greatest degree. It tends directly to injure the object of her maternal love by breaking down all nice distinctions of honor and honesty. If a boy may deceive a father for selfish ends, that father whom he is bound to respect, love, reverence and obey above all other men—and does this with the approbation and assistance of his own mother, how can that boy be expected to have any fine sense of honor and honesty toward other men? The inevitable result of all such practice of deception will be to destroy, in the mind of that boy, all high respect for the truth, and lead him to seek to obtain his ends by any means, however justifiable, which seem to promise success. And thus he grows to be a character notable for being tricky, dishonest and dishonorable.

But it is not necessary to wait until he arrives at manhood to see the fruit. Having learned, by maternal assistance, to deceive his father, he contrives his plots against his mother. After a time she is greatly surprised to find that boy playing off the grossest deceptions upon herself. At first she is astonished above measure and grieved beyond expression. She can not conceive it possible that the son for whom she has done so much should turn against her with such ingratitude. She does not stop to think that he is only practicing on her the very lessons she has taught him; that she herself has been one of the chief means of destroying within him all nice sense of honor and all true parental respect. And yet, such are the exact facts in the case; nor is it anything uncommon to hear boys justify the deceptions they practice upon their mothers by saying, "Oh! pshaw! she cheats the old man, and I cheat her—it's all on the square!"

Too great care cannot be observed in maintaining the strictest honor and honesty in all home transactions. Everything done and said should be the very soul of truth. More boys—and girls too—are morally ruined in their homes, and by home influence and example, than anywhere else, or in any other way. It is done by the false lessons there taught them; by the loose ideas there engendered in their mind; by the deceptions there practiced; and by the "white lies" there spoken and enacted. Under the influence of these they grow up with no high sense of honor; with no staunch adherence of integrity; with no firm principle sufficient to bind them to the right and to barricade them against the assaults of temptation. And this must be the case when home-life is not the soul of honor in all its ways—the correct practice of truth and of integrity in all its acts.

In view of these facts we feel that it is of the greatest importance that mothers should be brought to consider the danger to their children which grows out of those maternal deceptions which are too prevalent in many homes.

## Foolscap Papers.

### Concerning a Duel with Swords.

I AM a man of peace, but occasionally I am compelled to break it.

When Bloggs insinuated that my venerable grandmother was no gentleman I felt the Whitehorn blood of thirty centuries rise within me, and I straightway called upon him at his house for a retraction and apology, and to make him enter into bonds to keep the peace forever after, according to international laws and usages.

I found him at home, and the following bloodthirsty conversation ensued:

"Mr. Bloggs," said I, defiantly, "I desire you to retract immediately, forthwith, or at least suddenly!"

Mr. B. said that it was his custom never to take anything back.

"Then," said I, ferociously, "you will hold yourself my debtor for several bucketsful of blood; in other words, consider yourself challenged to mortal or immortal combat, for that is the only honorable way I settle all my difficulties. I am not in the interest of any tombstone factory and get no per cent., but tombstone men do a good business in my neighborhood."

Bloggs said it gave him great pleasure to accept and suggest swords.

SWORDS! S-w-o-r-d-s. Swords. Webster defines them to be weapons for cutting or thrusting—sharp instruments.

Said I boldly: "You do not really mean swords, Mr. B.?"

"Swords are the word, Mr. W., most assuredly."

"Well," said I, bravely, "do you mean to say sharp swords with edges?"

"Yes, sir," he answered; "they must be sharp, and with two edges."

"Oh," said I, "as far as the edges are concerned I shall not insist that they be too sharp; I would not care," said I, sarcastically, "if the swords were single-edged, with the edge just as sharp as the back. But, how about the buttons on the point?" I asked, contemptuously, for he couldn't frighten me.

"No buttons on the point at all," said he, "unless vest buttons should get stuck on in the encounter."

"You don't think it best to fight with swords so close as that?" I said, wittingly, and with thunder in my tones.

"As close as that," he answered.

"Haven't you any little idea about your person that it would be quite as satisfactory to fight this duel across lots?" I asked, scornfully, with belligerence in my manner.

"No, sir; I insist that we fight with our left arms tied together, and to fight until one or the other falls."

"But," said I, coolly and defiantly, "if it is necessary to fight with one arm tied, why would it not do just as well, or a little better, to fight with both our arms tied together?" I looked at him fiercely.

"That will never do. You see, Mr. W., that I am perfectly willing to give you all the satisfaction you demand in this thing."

I saw he was.

"And," continued he, very badly frightened, "one or both of us must expect to be all cut to pieces."

That was what I thought.

"It doesn't strike you, as it were, that a duel could be fought around a barn and become more highly exciting and sanguinary than otherwise?" said I, with a calmness and serenity that must have struck him to the heart.

"Nothing of the sort," he replied, terror-strickenly; "I'll assure you that will not answer."

I couldn't see why it might not.

"I'll answer you, Mr. B., that I am perfectly willing, nay, anxious to allow you to have your way in this thing, but," said I, with battle in my tones, "I dislike to cut your body in two with a sword, and thus make two continents of you, and would like to know to what kind of sword you allude?"

"Swords of true Toledo steel," said he.

"That is what I would prefer myself," said I, savagely, though, when a boy, I used to fight often with words made out of wood. I thought I might do better with them, never having practiced with steel swords."

He looked at me scared nearly to death at my perfectly aggravating serenity on such a terrible occasion, and said that steel, true and tried, would be vastly more effective.

I was also under the impression that they would.

"Of course, the points you will insist upon being bent around?" I asked, not the least bit daunted.

"That wouldn't afford you very much satisfaction," he replied, very greatly alarmed.

I couldn't see why it wouldn't.

"You shall arrange this thing just to suit yourself, certainly, but of course, you intend the swords to have the sheaths on," said I, with the most heroic bearing.

"Without the sheaths—nothing but the naked sword," he replied, very much startled; "I want to oblige you in every respect."

It was plain he did.

"What kind of shields do you think would be the best in the matter of defense?" I asked, warily.

"There is to be no defense made in this fight; we are to cut and slash away until one or the other yells enough."

"Well, as to yelling out, I would be willing to allow you the preference in that, but, what time do you suggest?" I asked, murderously; "it's better not to be too hasty in such a serious matter as this."

"To-morrow morning," he said, with trembling consternation.

"That is satisfactory, my dear Mr. Bloggs. I will be there or send a hand. Good day."

WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

## Topics of the Time.

—About a clerk's life in New York much misconception exists among young men in the country. The idea that, if a clerk's situation is once secured, all is clear sailing after that, is far indeed from the truth. A sketch of clerk life, evidently written by one who is perfectly "posted," says: "A clerk is, at best, but a floating clerk. He shifts from place to place often, is liable to discharge at the most unexpected moment for unforeseen reasons—is often out of work and out of money, and scarcely ever lives in continuous comfortable circumstances. It is a mystery that becomes of that crowd of youths which every season floods to the metropolis in pursuit of wealth, but it may be said that a very few ever reach success, and a very large proportion go to ruin." And yet, because it is a "genteel" calling, hundreds of young men yearly abandon good homes, good trades, good prospects in other directions to accept the terribly dependent and often humiliating position of "counter-jumper." Take our advice, young man, and be anything else than a dry-goods clerk. Leave that to those who cannot do anything else.

It is by no means either an absurd proposition or a scientific chimera that the world may at any time lose its present centrifugal gravity and *cassise*. The more investigation made into the subject the more apparent becomes the fact that there is a constantly increasing tendency of water toward the south polar region. When this accumulation has reached a certain point, the balance of the earth must be suddenly destroyed—the center of gravity abruptly change far from the center of gravity, and the whole earth, almost instantaneously, must turn transversely on its axis, move the great oceans, and so produce one of those grand cataclysms which have before now altered the whole face of the globe. Some very good physicists have conceded the possibility of this disturbance of the center of gravity—and particularly as we are yearly making the northern hemisphere lighter by vaporizing coal, iron, etc., and by distributing the salts of the soil and the sediment of the rocks in the sea. It is but the process and progress of nature for all this to happen.

A woman in Minneapolis recently astonished a crowd who were trying to start a bawky horse by the Russian sable—the skin of the Mustela Zibellina, which is about three or four times as large as the common weasel, to which family it belongs. A choice skin of the sea otter or the black fox may command a higher price than one of the Russian sable, but the cost of the latter will be relatively greater on account of its smaller size. The fur of the Russian sable is brown in summer, with some gray spots on the head, and may be distinguished from all other furs by the hairs turning and lying equally well in any direction. In winter, when the animal is usually taken, the color of the fur is a beautiful blue. The darkest skins are the most valuable. All of which information is valuable—especially to those who never expect to attain to a sable cape unless they marry some fool who doesn't know what to do with his money. The woman who dreams of a cape of sable mustn't say a word about it before her marriage.

The existence of the maelstrom off the coast of Norway is so accredited in tradition and story that to say the great whirlpool is a myth is a rude rejection of many a terrible narrative of the great whirlpool's awful power. But it is a myth, nevertheless; there is no such fatal vortex. There is, however, a little fact out of which the monster maelstrom has grown. In the narrow strait, off the Norway coast, is a huge naked rock, which might fairly be called an island. It lifts itself above the waters, breasting the conflicting currents caused by the winds and tides. Between this rock and the cape on Muskong is the "whirlpool," consisting merely of current and eddy made by light tide and heavy wind. When these prevail and conjoin their forces the navigation of the strait becomes dangerous to sailing vessels but not to steamers. While there are at rare times powerful eddies, which give objects floating upon them a fearful spiral motion, there is nothing like a vortex produced by a subterranean discharge of the water, although the tumbling and boiling character of the spiral current may submerge temporarily objects drifting on the surface.

The Shah of Persia is a very expensive man to entertain as a guest. He never visits any one without expecting to receive presents. Not long since he was entertained for a whole day by Hirma Hussein Khan, at his house in Teheran. The Shah breakfasted there and received many presents, \$12,000 in cash for himself, and jewels and one hundred Cashmere shawls for his ladies. The entertainment cost Hussein Kahn \$20,000. The English reverse this: they make their guests pay. If you call you fee the servant at the door, the mistress of the house who would preside at the table, and the guest out, and thus defraud the servant of his or her fee, would quickly be "served with a notice." On the whole we prefer the Teheran custom.

—He that loses his conscience has nothing left that is worth keeping. Therefore besure to look to that. And in the next place look to your health; and if you have it, praise God and value it next to a good conscience; for health is the second blessing that we mortals are capable of—a blessing that money cannot buy; therefore value it and be thankful for it, and remember that this is the best reason for subscribing to a weekly paper, which will give you more for the money than anything outside of Peter Cooper's will.

A nice-looking girl who graduated at Vassar College, and now keeps house for an industrious young man, said the other day that she would rather have a good recipe for making sweet pickles than to be able to read a yard of Latin. Out of thirty-five young ladies who studied all the branches taught in that popular summer resort, twenty-seven of them married poor men, and of course a good recipe for pickles or huckleberry jam lays way over Greek and mathematics to keep house with.

An amusing case came before the Paris tribunal recently. An audacious young thief, well known to the police, was charged with having stolen property to the value of several hundred pounds from a shop in the Rue Villeneuve. Putting on an injured and innocent expression of countenance, he coolly offered the ingenious defense that he was passing by the shop in question when he saw placarded all over the windows that "everything inside was to be had for nothing." He thereupon entered, and, loading himself with some few articles, he decamped, and was much astonished to find himself pursued by a policeman. The magistrate dismissed the case, but administered a strong caution to the prisoner to beware of such invitation to plunder for the future, telling him that such advertisements generally meant two per cent. off the selling price.

The fashion now so prevalent of ornamenting ladies' hats and bonnets with small birds given such an impetus to the activity of the bird-catchers both in England and in France, as to cause well-grounded fears for the annihilation of favorite songsters. This was forcibly pointed out in a case which came recently before the Dover Bench, in which two men were charged with trespass. Upon them were found no less than fifty-one dead skylarks, and a large number of dead linnets, thrushes, bullfinches, etc. A gentleman connected with the Customs at Dover stated that it was well known that a large premium was paid for these birds.

## Readers and Contributors.

TO CORRESPONDENTS AND AUTHORS.—No MSS. received that are not fully prepaid in postage.—No MSS. preserved for future notice.—Unavailable MSS. promptly returned only where stamps accompany the inclosure, for such return.—No correspondence of any nature is permissible in a package marked as "Book MSS."—MSS. which are imperfect are not used or treated in an exacting manner. Many upon merit or fitness; second, upon excellence of MSS. as to "copy," third, length. Of two MSS. of equal merit we always prefer the shorter.—Never write on both sides of a sheet. Use Commercial Note paper as most convenient to editor and compositor, tearing off each page as it is written, and carefully giving it its full page number.—A rejection by no means implies a want of merit. Many MSS. unavailable to us are well worthy of use.—All experienced and popular writers will find us ever ready to give their offerings early attention.—Correspondents must look to this column for all information in regard to contributions. We can not write letters except in special cases.

Accepted: "The Silver Lining;" "The Price of a Woman's Soul;" "The Old Clock's Secret;" "The Doctor's Loss and Gain;" "The Sonnet's Wife;" "Too Deaf to Woo;" "Jostah's Serenade;" "Out of Her Spheres;" "A Good Result;" "Speaking by Proxy;" "How Old Rob was Robbed;" "The Pony Expressman's Last Ride."

We must decline "Minnie;" "Aunt Hetty's Matrimonial Adventure;" "The Westons;" "Aunt Trilby's Kronicles;" "Out in the World;" (serial); "The Gaslight Ghost;" "In Arkansas, Spain;" "Expect No More;" "A Boatman's Revenge;" "A Heavy Loss;" "Cecilia's First Love."

P. A. L. Dick Talbot series out of print in the JOURNAL. All are reprinted in the Twenty-Cent Novel series.

Jos. H. M. Calvert. "Death-Notch" out of print. You should not have lent your papers. Let each one who wants them be satisfied.

JEFFERSON PERRY. Write to Brooklyn Navy Yard Naval Commander for the required information. He will send you the printed regulations.

MOODY CONYER, No. 10. In the Old Testament there are 22,440 verses. It was cracked in 1847, 7,584—making 30,024 in all. It will therefore take you about a year to read the Bible through, reading at the rate of 100 verses per day.

M. Chicago. As for mostly water, to drink water after eating fruit is a mistake. The water is the same as milk. During meals, as a rule, drink very little of any fluid.

CHAS. H. We know nothing of the American Watch Co. The United States Watch Co. is at Marion, N. J., and makes an excellent watch. Ask some dealer about the matter.

C. W. We give so many good things, in our paper, for boys and girls, that a department of the kind, you name is hardly called for. A child's column never can be never can be satisfied with a weeklies and monthlies which are all juvenile, and these the younger children should take.—The poem you remit is quite too crude to be available.

CHRIS. E. Avoid all hair-oils. Use bear's grease if absolutely needed. To obtain fresh fish, eat fish foods. A meat diet does not make fat. No treatment for sweaty feet is so good as giving them a cold water bath every night. Change stockings regularly every day.—As for the other article, consult a good physician and avoid quacks.—If the young lady does not reply to your notes it is very evident she wants nothing to do with you. For a press an unwelcome suit.—Apply to D. Van Nostrand, Scientific Book Publisher, New York.

ALLIE B. L. To make good "raised" or yeast bread is so much of an art that the very best mode to learn is to take lessons of some housewife who breads a real success. Any good bread-maker will give you information with pleasure. Soda bread is best as biscuits, but not as "loaves." Use "prepared flour" for that, it is needlessly expensive. For recipes for all kinds of bread see Beadle's Dime Cook Book.

ORLANDO W. Norfolk asks about the old Philadelphia State House bell when it was cast and when cracked. We answer: It was cracked in 1847, while ringing an alarm of fire. It was cast in 1753, in Philadelphia, by Messrs. Pass & Stow, under the superintendence of the city authorities. The bell of the colonial assembly, who also suggested the motto upon it: "Proclaim Liberty throughout all the land, to all the inhabitants thereof."

G. N. Kerosene will cleanse rust from iron. Rub it with flannel, and draw the rust out. It will move oil and rust together. Always grease any article of iron or steel before putting it away. The grease prevents rust, even where moisture exists. We have no personal knowledge of the sewing-machine alluded to, but know it has a good reputation. All good sewing-machines are outrageously high, considering their actual cost. One of the Chinese cost less than one-fourth of that sum to construct. That's the secret of the sewing-machine millionaires.

OAKSHAW CORNERS' MAN writes that he entered into a contract, which for the sake of convenience was drawn up on Sunday. He has fulfilled his part of this contract, and the other contracting party, a Jew, to use his own words, "goes back on him," on the ground that a Sunday contract is not binding in law. "Can't," he writes, "I force him legally to fulfill his part, as the matter entails a heavy loss upon me as it is?" We answer: No. The law of the land does not consider himself bound by honor, you have no legal redress, as contracts made on Sunday cannot be enforced. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy is an injunction against all business, on that day, which the law sustains.

MAT. E. DWYER. A life in Australia is very nearly analogous to that of Colorado, with this exception—that its people are largely drawn from the convict classes adjacent, and from the laboring classes of Great Britain. Sheep farming and mining are its chief industries. One who would go to Colorado, or even Oregon, offers far superior inducements for a young man. The cheapest way to get to Australia is by a sailing vessel from New York—the voyage about three months and a half long.

JOHN HOWARD. We know of no "Family Physician" book so good as that by Dr. Warren, of Boston.—An infant's pulse before ten to the minute; a child of seven about 80; from seven to nine years it is 70 beats a minute, declining to 60 at four-score. A healthy grown person beats 70 times in a minute; there may be good health at 65, but the pulse always exceeds 70, there is a disease; the machine is working itself out; there is a fever or inflammation somewhere; the body is feeding on itself, as in consumption, when the pulse is quick, that is, over seventy, gradually increasing, with decreased chances of cure, until it reaches 110 or 120, when death comes before many days. When the pulse is over 70 for months, and there is a slight cough, the lungs are affected. The pulse decreases when a recurring fever is assuaged, for a length of time, and is increased by stimulants, and the presence of food in the stomach.

"AMERICAN" writes: "Do you consider a young man, nineteen years of age, too young to make an engagement of marriage? That style of ring would make a handsome engagement ring—one that would cost from fifteen to thirty dollars." A young man of nineteen is not too young to engage himself under certain favorable circumstances. We have known of very happy marriages made at that age resulting from even earlier betrothals; yet we consider it advisable, ordinarily, for men to be several years older before they marry. A ring generally chosen as an engagement-ring, when an expensive one is required, is a chased or engraved hoop of gold. This may be made of solid gold, as you prefer, though too fine wears away rapidly, and bear an inscription upon the inside. Solitaire pearl rings are sometimes used, but just require delicate care. A plain flat band of gold, square upon the edge, as if cut off a hollow stick, in which a garnet, tourmaline, or small diamond is sunk, makes a pretty and comparatively inexpensive ring.

HORACE. Ralston writes: "I would like your opinion upon a little matter, and likewise your advice. I was sent by my father to a friend of his on some business. I was compelled to dine, and also spent several hours at the house of the gentleman. At dinner I met his daughter, a pretty girl, who was very pleasant; and I liked her very much, and do yet. Immediately after dinner she left the room and only passed through it once again, though I was compelled to sit three hours in company with her mother and sister-in-law. Now do you not think, as she was much more my own age, and I was a guest at the house, that she should have endeavored to have been more entertaining and spent some of her time in my company? As I saw so little of her, and have no reasons for visiting the house again, how can I make her further acquaintance, as I am very anxious to do?" Though you were a guest at the young lady's home, you were, in nowise, her guest, and she was under no obligations to devote her time to a man who was simply a business agent to her father. She may have had, and doubtless did have, some occupation that made it impossible for her to spend her time with you. As you, evidently, were a person to whom she was utterly indifferent, and you have no valid excuse for going to her home, we would advise you to forget her, or, like Micawber, patiently wait for something to turn up."



IT WILL ALL COME RIGHT AGAIN.  
SONG.BY EREN E. REXFORD.  
Author of "Silver Threads Among the Gold."

To-day I read in the Psalmist  
The royal singer's Song  
Of faith in the far-off goodness—  
To triumph over wrong;  
And I thought that what'er of sorrow,  
Of care or grief or pain  
Was mine, in some glad to-morrow,  
It would all come right again.  
The shadows may hide the sunshine,  
And the skies be dark with rain,  
But we know that in God's to-morrow  
It will all come right again.

The day may be dark and doleful,  
The sky may be gray and cold,  
But to-morrow may have its sunshine,  
And the sunset-time its gold.  
Not always the wrong and error,  
Not always a hidden sin,  
But some day the right will triumph,  
And some time the storm be done.  
So, when shadows hide the sunshine,  
And the skies are dark with rain,  
Be sure that in God's to-morrow  
It will all come right again.

Vials of Wrath:  
OR,  
THE GRAVE BETWEEN THEM.BY MRS. MARY REED CROWELL,  
AUTHOR OF "TWO GIRLS' LIVES," "LOVE-  
BLIND," "OATH BOUND," "BARBARA'S  
FATE," ETC., ETC.CHAPTER XV.  
THE SERPENT'S GUILT.

It was a quiet, uneventful wedding—Ethel Mary's and Frank Havelstock's. The little parish chapel that bore no trace of bridal favors, only the glad sunshine that streamed in at the small chancel window; the unpresumptuous, unromantic curate, who read the service in his dull monotone; the rows of empty seats, and four or five straggling worshippers who were surprised at the ceremony.

They were the only witnesses; for Mr. Havelstock had not wanted to invite Ethel's enemy—Mrs. Lawrence; and of them only one was requested to sign her name beneath the officiating clergyman's.

The ceremony was soon over—so fatefully short, so fearfully binding; and Ethel realized, without one thrill of prescient dread, that she was never more Ethel Mary, but Ethel Havelstock. She was very grave, with a sweet, shy sincerity in her manner, and a tender, thoughtful joy in her deep eyes, as with fingers that would tremble, spite of herself, she signed the marriage register.

They walked down the aisle, Ethel on her husband's arm, and entered the carriage as quietly and unostentatiously as they had come—only there was such an awful difference—I say awful; perhaps, rather, awe—full—only Ethel did not realize it; and, perhaps, it was as well that she did not—perhaps, in view of all that she would be called upon to suffer and endure, her fate was kind to her in thus permitting her to crowd into a brief space such exquisite content.

They were driven direct to the little rustic station that accommodated Tanglewood; and Havelstock hung out the scarlet signal for the train already in sight.

He had arranged it well with his shrewd forethought and the knowledge that none of the family at Tanglewood, or arriving or departing guests, ever used this early train. He knew that at the very moment he was assisting his bride in the car, in all probability breakfast was just over at Tanglewood, and that Mrs. Lexington and Ida Wynne, in their morning wrappers, were lounging in their own rooms; possibly in the conservatory.

He had left word for Georgia that unexpected business, which he explained to Mr. Lexington, called him away for an indefinite time. He had commissioned Mr. Lexington—to whom he gave as his reason some reasonable business engagement—to convey his regards and regrets to Miss Wynne and the other guests, and then—he went for Ethel Mary.

A couple of hours' ride brought them to New York, where Havelstock brought his bride to the Breevoort for dinner. After dinner, first, a drive through Central Park, that was radiant with all the splendor of June glory, and then to the Fall River station, on which they were to take passage to Boston for a short, quiet wedding tour.

The weather was just perfection, and in its sweetness in accord with Ethel's sunny face and lightsome heart. It was a delightful trip—a very ideal of complete happiness, and the fair bride found herself asking of herself every hour of every one of those swift-passing, bliss-laden days, when she and Havelstock leisurely traveled wherever his inclination led him, if she were really, herself—really Ethel Mary, whom Mrs. Lawrence had ordered from her roof?

Her happiness dizzied her with its intoxicating sweetness and rare newness, and by a thousand charming, graceful wiles, that sprung from her contented heart, from her affectionate gratitude, Ethel taught her husband to love her more and more.

He really did love her as deeply as was consistent with his nature and his principles. He admired her most unfeignedly, and respected her as he did no one else. He knew her to be of purest principle; a girl who would not stoop to suffer in the right rather than permit the wrong; and he knew, too, with a curious realization of his own demerits, that if Ethel could read some of the hidden pages of his eventful life, her love, ardent though it was, would barely have forgiven him.

Another peculiarity about Ethel had particularly attracted Havelstock's notice, and that was the unconscious influence she exerted over him for the better. He felt condemned, self-reproached, penitent for his misdeeds the more intimately he was admitted to her confidence, and the result was, when their wedding-trip was over, and they had taken possession of the snug little house in 123d street, that an agent had secured for Havelstock during their tour, he never was nearer purity, peace and happiness in all his life.

One day, a month after their marriage it was, they were standing together in their delightfully cosy little parlor. Havelstock suddenly told Ethel so—told her in an ardent, earnest manner that delighted her beyond expression.

"I believe you are my good angel, darling," he said, caressing her face as he drew her head down to his shoulder, and looked down in her frank, sweet eyes. "You are my north star of purity, goodness, peace, toward which I am magnetically attracted with all my faults, wickedness, shortcomings. I haven't been the best man in the world, little wife, but I hardly realized the true facts of the case until I met you; and now I promise to make myself more worthy of you, my little darling. We will be so happy, won't we?"

"We are so perfectly happy, Frank," she corrected, gently. "I sometimes think my heart must burst for very bliss when I realize solemnly, gladly, that I am your wife—your wife, Frank, never to be parted from you until death comes between us."

"Ethel, darling! my wife! and my strange, mysterious past does not trouble you at all?" She lifted her head from his shoulder, then, and stood before him in all the queenliness of her wifehood.

"Before I knew you, dear, you were not accountable to me; surely, since I have known you, you have been perfection to me. Besides—her face lost its tender gravity, and a bright smile, so arch and roguish, dimpled around her mouth—"besides, you see I don't quite believe you have been so frightfully wicked—I don't think you have another wife living."

She said it as if she meant it, and yet only said so to prove to her husband her implicit confidence in him.

Havelstock laughed more joyously than Ethel had ever heard him do before.

"You can rest perfectly content on that score, dear, and let us dismiss the conversation on this subject and introduce another more to the point. Did you know I must leave you here, all by yourself, for a fortnight?"

Ethel's face clouded for a second, then she smiled bravely.

"I have only been waiting for that. Of course, I knew you would wish to visit Tanglewood often. Are you going at once, Frank?"

"I am not particular to a day or two, although I must admit I am somewhat impatient to return to Mr. Lexington's family, if only for the briefest visit. Tanglewood is charming."

A hurried thought of Ida Wynne's fair face crossed his mind, as he spoke, and a memory of Georgia's calm, despairing life, that had approached no nearer its desired happiness during his absence—he knew that from tri-weekly letters of warmest confidence from Lexington—this memory occurred to him with an intensity that made his black eyes flash with a sudden brilliancy that did not escape Ethel's loving observation. And she felt, rather than thought, that Frank, much as he loved her, devoted as he had been, pined after his customary habits and companions; and a sharp regret that she had permitted him to remain away from them so long, rose to her lips.

"You must go at once—to-day," she said, resolutely; "we can be ready—"

She stopped as abruptly as she had begun, the hot crimson rushing to her cheeks in thin, telltale tide.

She turned away from him, pretending to be busy arranging music on the piano, merely to conceal the mortification she experienced because she had let pass her lips the intimation she had intended never should pass them.

She was proud—this Ethel Havelstock, as proud as a duchess of bluest blood, and until her husband said to her he was ready to take her among his relations, Ethel was determined never to hint such was her own desire.

Of course, she expected nothing less—what wife would? Of course, she had supposed when her husband went to Tanglewood, she would accompany him, although neither of them had ever mentioned the subject. Now, when he had said he must go, and leave her alone a fortnight, it had struck Ethel with a sensation not altogether pleasurable, but she had at once convinced herself that she either misunderstood him, or that he had feasible reasons for going without her.

Then, in her sweet selfishness, she had momentarily forgotten herself, her own wishes in her eagerness for his happiness, that she saw would be augmented by a visit to his accustomed place; and so had spoken, in her thoughtlessness, words that shamed her to have said.

As she turned her back to him, Havelstock's face gloomed, and he, too, turned on his heel, and looked out of the window, wondering how on earth he was to manage it—this leaving Ethel, and at the same time, not hurting her feelings.

To take her with him was so ridiculously out of all manner of reason, that he never had given it the most trivial thought. That the Lexingtons, or any one at Tanglewood should know of him as a married man was not to be thought of, for a moment—at present, at least, delightful as it was personally to feel himself the proprietor of the little cottage in 123d street.

Why he desired to cover the track of this marriage, he himself could give no reason for—it was the innate badness of the man, whose heart was a serpent's nest of all that was designing, treacherous, sinister; it was the devilish cautiousness that Satan's own always exerts in.

To him, Ethel Mary had been nearly his salvation. She had influenced as no other human soul could do, and under her influence he had approached as near goodness and reform as he ever was to be permitted to come; he had his moment of superficial penitence, and then—crossed the dead line, that from the moment of that conversation in their parlor, that bright, sunny June day, divided their steps forever and ever.

"My dearest, I am sorry if you expected to accompany me, but in my judgment it is not practicable—just now. For reasons of my own, I desire our marriage to be kept very quiet—unknown even to my cousin Theodore."

There was intense authority in his gentle words; an authority Ethel felt in every nerve of her body as she left the music half arranged, and marched over to his side—her face pallid, her eyes glowing like stars.

"Frank! you mean to tell me you are ashamed of our marriage?"

He saw the uprising indignation all over her face, and he deemed discretion the better part of valor, for the nonce.

"Ashamed? ashamed? what can you be thinking of, my darling? A thousand times no! My reasons would satisfy even you, if you knew them, and understood financial arrangements. Can't you trust me, Ethel?"

He raised her face to his; she looked into his eyes, full of well-simulated emotion—and only remembered how she loved him.

"I trust you—my husband!"

And that was the way Frank Havelstock bade his wife adieu, and went to Tanglewood.

CHAPTER XVI.  
A BLOW ON THE HEART.

AFFAIRS at Tanglewood were in precisely the same condition that Lexington had represented to Havelstock in his correspondence. The days had come and gone, full of heart-sickening grief to Georgia—a grief she was forced to hide under the cover of quiet content, the horrid working of which was corroding her very soul with its agonies.

To Lexington, in his pride, his anger, his passionate love that he kept constantly crushing up to all the strength of his grand nature, life at Tanglewood was little short of torment;

and yet, he stubbornly refused to leave it, and as doggedly determined to keep his wife at her proper distance.

It was a fearful condition of affairs, and nothing short of almost superhuman pride and sensitiveness on both his and Georgia's part would have sufficed to keep their ghastly secret hidden.

And so the weary days went on; the guests, except Ida Wynne, departed, and others filled their places—themselves to depart, until in midsummer, Tanglewood was left to the fated two, and Ida.

They had missed Havelstock very greatly—even Georgia, who since his well-simulated interest in her welfare, had learned to regret her prejudice against him, and desired to atone for it.

It was very quiet—and Georgia liked it so, best—but to-day, when her husband had gone down to the city, and Ida was off with a party, picnicking, Georgia was strangely unrestful, with a foreboding of some calamity weighing heavily on her mind.

She had been in her own rooms since lunch, of which she had partaken alone, with so little appetite for food as to render eating a task.

She had locked her doors on the inside, and dismissed her maid, who had previously prepared her mistress' dinner toilet, and then, in cool, comfortable undress, began the attempt to pass the intervening hours until dinner, that would bring not only her husband home, but Ida Wynne, and Frank Havelstock.

Mr. Lexington had that morning, at breakfast, made the announcement that Frank's long absence was at an end, and that he would be at Tanglewood at six that night.

Georgia had replied she was glad, that she would see that his rooms were in readiness, and then asked Mr. Lexington if his coffee-cup needed replenishing.

An hour after Ida had gone with the wood-party, and later, Mr. Lexington had taken an early train.

They had been entirely alone in the breakfast parlor when he went out—Georgia's heart was fluttering wildly as it always did when, by any mischance, they two were by themselves, and she knew all her torn, tempest-tossed soul looked out of her wistful eyes, cold, calm, unconcerned as she forced her manner to appear.

Lexington had read his paper, whistled to the canaries in the bay window, and then consulted his watch, and rung for a servant to order the phaeton in ten minutes. After everything else was arranged, he turned to his wife.

"Have you any commands? I shall be back in time for dinner."

He was very courteous, very solicitous.

"None, thank you, to-day."

She gave her answer in her sweet, cheery way, that was so perfectly at variance with her feelings. "Any commands?" she thought of it now, as she walked slowly to and fro in her dressing-room—any commands for him? when she would have knelt at his feet, and implored him to take her to his heart again.

She was suffering terribly for her cruelty—her harshness to him that day he returned; and her soul sickened with deadly faintness as she realized how wide a gulf was yawning between her and happiness.

Pacing to and fro, amid all the elegance of her surroundings, the tears dropped slowly from her eyes, then fell faster and faster, until it seemed as if the very floodgates of her sorrow were loosened, and, in utter desolation and abandon of anguish, she threw herself on the floor, and let the storm rage as it would.

It seemed to her as if some terrible crisis were coming in her life; as if some cloud of pent-up wrath were about to burst on her head, against whose fierce wrath she knew herself to be perfectly powerless.

The first violence of her agitation spent, Georgia was disposed to look at this singular presentiment in a calmer, less fevered mood; and, in so looking and examining, came to the rational conclusion that her morbid impulses had wrought the shadow on her spirit, that would disappear under the influence of less lonely hours.

Gradually she became calmer, until, in place of her wild agitation, she resumed her usual weary, patient woe, pitiful to behold, so infinitely piteous to endure.

Very slowly the time seemed in passing that afternoon, and more times than Georgia would have dared confessed, had she gone to the windows overlooking the road to the Tanglewood station, in a forlorn, vague expectancy of seeing her husband approaching, although she was perfectly aware there was no possible way for him to reach home until the hour appointed.

It was after three when she rung for her maid to begin her toilet for dinner—anything was preferable to those dragging, leaden-footed moments.

She took unusual interest in her dress that afternoon—she could not account for it then, except that she so thirsted and hungered for favor in her husband's eyes. Afterward, she thought it must have been down itself that helped her to look so wondrously fair, so perfectly radiant.

She wore a light silk—very nearly white, with a shade of pale green that caught the light in certain directions. It was made very plainly, and the absence of trimming at the waist only seemed to reveal more perfectly the exquisite outlines of her faultless figure; the sleeves were wide, and had a narrow frill of lace at the wrist, that fell away to the very elbow, displaying her arms, so white, round, firm, with wide-link bracelets.

She allowed her maid to dress her hair in a style she seldom affected, but that was vastly becoming—rolled up from her forehead in a rich, half-waving mass, and tied at the crown of her head, and then left to ripple down over her shoulders in all its length and lustrous beauty.

It was the way Mr. Lexington had liked to see her hair arranged in those early, happy days, and a style she had positively refused to adopt since his return—until to-day. And, to-day, with her heart so overwhelmed with yearning love for him that pride was almost smothered, she allowed herself the sweet indulgence, little recking who should see her.

"I will go down the walk toward the gates," she thought, with a sudden resolution, as she swept down the grand staircase and out on the piazza. "He will be coming soon—no, I will not be so childish, only to be sneered at by him. It will never, never cease, this death-in-life!"

She retraced her steps wearily, halting, undeterminedly, by the wide open door of the music-room; then she consulted her watch almost nervously.

"There remains an hour yet—a whole weary hour."

She crossed the floor to the grand piano that stood open, as Ida Wynne had left it, with several new classical pieces strewn carelessly upon it, and on the rack that sweetest, most pathetic of ballads that never will grow old,

that never has, and never will fail of touching the heart of the listener, he be ever so unromantic or callous-hearted—"Then you'll remember me."

Almost mechanically Georgia sat down and touched the sweet chords, then glided off into the melodious accompaniment so quaintly tender, that unconsciously urged her voice to sing the wail in the words. She was absorbed for the first time in weeks—for the first time since Mr. Lexington had returned; she did not hear the summons at the door, or note the entrance of the footman, who respectfully laid the card of his tiny silver salver beside her, on the music stand, on the pile of music, not presuming to interrupt her song.

But she was unaware of it all; those heart-touching words, so perfect an echo of her own feelings—

"When hollow hearts shall wear a mask,  
"Twill break your own to see,  
In such an hour I only ask  
That you'll remember me,  
That you'll remember me."

The pathos in her tone was indescribable; the wail was as straight from her poor, torn heart as though the words had been born there. The tears gathered in her eyes, her fingers trembled and lost their skill, and came crashing on the pearl keys in a shriek of horrid discord.

She whirled around on the stool, half in an agony of pain, half actuated by a thrill of proud impatience, and, faced a man who stood at the end of the instrument in quiet, respectful silence, with a red glow in his eyes, a malicious smile on his lips.

She stooped as sharply as if she had instantly been petrified to stone. Not a sound escaped her, as she stared at him, in frozen, voiceless horror, her hands hanging powerless at her side, whither they had fled, seemingly in fear, from the pursuing shriek of her last discordant sounds.

He bowed with a cool courtesy that was the quintessence of demonism.

"I beg to apologize for the shock I have given you, but I preferred to break the ice at once."

Then, at sound of his voice, life, volition, motion rushed back to her again, in one whirling, maddening, horrifying torrent.

"Carleton Vincely! My God—can it be you?"

Her voice sounded hollow, and full of unuttered woe; she fairly gasped for her breath, and her heart was beating like a trip-hammer. It certainly was an awful minute, whose portentous meaning rushed upon Georgia with full, realizing force; her first husband alive, in her presence, and she the wife—alas, only in name! yet lawfully the wife of another man.

What wonder was it that she grew sick with deadly faintness, as she glanced into his face—merciless as death, with his basilisk eyes, its defiantly triumphant smile on the firm, stubborn lips.

"Alive! alive!"

She muttered the words in moaning terror, wringing her hands piteously.

"Evidently you did not expect me, Mrs.—what is the name? I have overcome you with surprise, and I fear I am not very welcome here as a guest. But as I came after my wife and child, whom I left safe and well when I went away, I am of course pardonable in seeking them wherever I might hear of them."

He laughed with malicious glee, as he seated himself on a dainty damask chair and glanced with cool criticism around the room.

"You're fixed very nicely, Georgia—better than I left you. Please explain the change of circumstances."

If he had been violent; if he had been reproachful; if he had been sorrow-stricken; anything but this chilling, smiling serenity of manner! It fairly crazed her, this peerless, heart-sore woman, on whose head another, new vial of wrath was so suddenly poured. This man she hated—of whom her husband was so terribly jealous, supposing him dead—what would he be when he learned his supposed rival was living? This man, whose child Theo Lexington was obliged to answer for, under Theo Lexington's roof, and he returning, on his way, perhaps at the very door!

Georgia sprung suddenly from the ottoman on which she had sunk, in that moment of terrible fright.

"You must go—at once! do you hear me? Mr. Lexington will be here soon, and he must not find you here, in this house."

Vincely never moved a muscle; only surveyed her with his dark, villainous eyes.

"You mean you do not care to witness a meeting between your two husbands? I see, Mrs.—what is the name?—that you are very much afraid of the gentleman with whom you are living so luxuriously here at Tanglewood. I am glad of it, very."

Georgia was too desperately in earnest to resent the insult in his words.

"For God's sake, go! I will see you again—anywhere, at any time—only go!"

He arose, then, with alacrity.

"That will suit me perfectly well. I will be at the little summer-house I passed as I came in, at nine to-night. If you fail me—"

His eyes made the threat his lips had no need to utter.

"I'll be there—I swear it. Only go!"

She pushed his heavy figure with her frail, fair hands, in an impulse of wild impatience.

"I can afford to be treated thus, Georgia—for the present."

He bowed, with a satyr-like smile in his bold eyes, as he leisurely went out the room, past the hall-porter, and out into the fresh sunshine.

Georgia watched him away, with wild, haunting eyes, her cold hands pressed tightly over her throbbing heart, her head whirling with mad dizziness.

Then she dragged herself to her room, and sunk down on her lounge, faint, cold, deathly ill, just as she heard, before she swooned into merciful unconsciousness, the gay voices of Ida Wynne, Frank Havelstock and her husband, as they entered the door together.

CHAPTER XVII.  
A MAGNANIMOUS OFFER.

IT WAS NOT LONG that Georgia lay in that deadly faint, looking like a figure carved from marble, so white and motionless she was. Her respite from suffering was very brief, and she found, when in wondering surprise she opened her woeful eyes, that not fifteen minutes' alleviation had been granted her.

It occurred to her, the instant she recovered consciousness; she remembered it all, with painfully minute correctness, and as she slowly, wearily arose from the low couch, and smoothed the silken drapery of her dress, she wondered if heaven would be denied her if she took her own barren, wasted life in her hands, and ended it, then and there.

A shade of whiter pallor crossed her face, as she tottered across the room to her dressing-bureau, and leaned her elbows heavily on the cool marble surface.

"There is a bottle of laudanum within reach

of my fingers; one moment of steady courage—and then, blessed, blessed sleep that will end all these turmoils forever. Nobody will care—not even he; I've no one this side the grave who would weep one tear for me, and, beyond, is my baby to welcome me. Shall I shall I?"

Her white, quivering fingers stole out toward a little dark bottle marked plainly, POISON. She removed the dark-stained cork, and, with dilated eyes, and parted lips, raised it to her mouth. One brief second of fateful indecision; one little space of time, when she lived an age of doubting anguish—and then, with a fierce, passionate gesture, she dashed the dark temptation on the floor; the sullen, red liquid pouring its tide over the white carpet, telling its own mute story of dire anguish, merciful release. Georgia fell on her knees, burying her face in the linen cushions of the easy-chair; the tears streaming over her cheeks in hot torrents.

"My God, forgive!—forgive and stay me in my hour of woe! Send strength to bear these crosses! give grace to endure! for thy dying Son's sake—help—oh, help!"

It was the very essence of spiritual agony, that tore her soul like a flame in a blast.

The gong for dinner followed close on that tragedy of her sad life—a human sound, a summons to a mortal world that was infinitely relieving to her. In her glass she saw the havoc the last hour had wrought; the circles under her eyes that seemed full of haunting fear and woe; the waxen pallor of her skin, the tense lines around her mouth. And yet, despite this all, there was a strangely sweet expression of peace on her lips—such agony of imploring prayer never yet failed of setting its answering seal.

She went down to the dining-room very like her own self, with a pleasant word for her household members, a kind greeting for Mr. Havelstock.

Lexington watched her across the room, with a brow stern and uncompromising.

"How glorious she is—how perfect in her womanly grace! and what a fool I am to yet know I would give my soul to take her once more in my arms and kiss her again!"

His heart was full of a strange commingling of tenderness and bitterness, that shone darkly in his eloquent eyes.

Apparently deeply absorbed in conversation with Ida Wynne, Havelstock noted the expression on Lexington's face.

"I have not returned a day too soon," he thought, gleefully. "Left to himself, this beautiful Georgia will not fail of winning him back to her again! I see the hunger in his eyes this very moment, and how it fights with the Lexington pride! Which shall win? Never that woman, while I have a voice to speak; and, if I could but summon Vincely to the field now, the triumph would be grand."

He looked at Georgia as she seated herself gracefully behind the tall spirit urn, little knowing the enemy was already in the camp. Lexington sauntered over to the table, where he seated himself opposite Georgia, both so handsome, so royally mated, so eternally divided.

Havelstock gave his arm to Miss Wynne and escorted her to her seat at the right of Georgia while he took his opposite Ida.

They were a fated quartette, whose paths of life were ordained to cross most inextricably before they arrived at the goal to which their feet, willing or unwilling, were drawn with as fatal certainty as those of Persephone, when she had eaten of the pomegranate seed.

It was a delightful study for Havelstock, this watching the actions of Lexington and his wife, of whose unfortunate enmity no one else save Havelstock entertained a suspicion. He liked to see the darkening of the ends of Georgia's eyes when her husband suddenly addressed her; he thoroughly enjoyed watching the dropping of her eyelids, the fleeting emotions that chased across her countenance like alternate shade and sunshine; he enjoyed it as an officer of the Inquisition might have enjoyed the torments of the victims on the rack.

But keener than any feeling Georgia might cause him was the satisfaction he took in keeping Lexington just where he wanted him, holding him, like a hound in leash, by means of subtle play on the passions that make a man blind, deaf, dumb to reason.

It was no hard task for Havelstock to keep the fire fanned into an impassable flame—the fire that separated the two, like a fiercely hot channel—not difficult, because in Lexington was just the material for the fuel—not jealousy, fiercest pride, stubbornst willfulness, qualities that, under judicious management, would have been only warm, ardent love and pardonable self-satisfaction. Equally not difficult because Havelstock was a master rogue, who had long ago considered himself graduated in deceit, treachery, devilish tact, which he himself, however, called by no such out-spoken names—rather, far-sightedness, cleverness, diplomacy.

So, while they ate, Havelstock took mental note, and satisfied himself it was time for Vincely to appear on the scene; and while he determined that found opportunity to flirt with Ida, whose delight at his return was evident, to his disgust. And yet—he smiled, looked meaningfully at her, and set her heart all a-tremble with exquisite elation, as she and Mrs. Lexington retired from the room, leaving the gentlemen to their wine. The instant the door was closed on the ladies, Lexington spoke to the butler.

"You may go, Evans." Then, turning to Havelstock, he pushed the bottle of Johannisburg and a tiny Bohemian goblet.

"Pour your wine, Frank, and drink to the success of a plan I shall suggest to you."

Havelstock touched his glass to Lexington's laughingly.

"I'll go it blind," he said, gayly.

"You will not object, I am sure of that; rather, when you learn how anxiously I desire to repay you for your disinterested kindness to me in my unhappy domestic affairs, you will thank me—at least for the motive."

Havelstock regarded his cousin with an air of wonderment. What could he mean?

"I do not desire to discuss the subject fully now. I only intend to give you a statement for you to think upon at your leisure. It is this



with well-concealed fires—fires of astonishment, chagrin, dumb wrath. Lexington waited a moment, expectantly.

"You don't refuse? Surely you will not disappoint me!"

Havelstock did not answer for another second; awful struggles were going on in his heart.

Refuse! refuse the wealth, the grandeur, the position he coveted above all things. He brought his lips together with a silent curse under his heavy mustache.

"Havelstock—it has only this instant occurred to me—you are not in any way entangled? You are not engaged—married?"

An instant of surging, seething emotion. One thought of Ethel, in her sweet, pure innocence—then a light laugh burst from his lips.

"My dear Lexington, I married? No, thank you! I was only stupefied at the magnanimous offer you made me. Give me till tomorrow to decide, will you?"

He lit a cigar and strolled out to the croquet lawn, just in time to catch a glimpse of Georgia's silken skirts as she entered the little summer-house.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 298.)

## A WINTER PICTURE.

BY SILAS SYLVESTER, JR.

Blank over river, moor and wold,  
King Winter reigns supreme;  
Deep, down the heather-fringed road  
The silver gleam;  
Across the leafless stretch of wood  
Blithe snowbirds flock in glee,  
And hold upon the mountain-ash  
Their annual jubilee.

Upon the hoar centennial oak  
Snow wreathes a coronal,  
And on its outstretched arms three crows  
To one another call.  
The cattle, once upon the hill,  
Now miss the emerald sod,  
The farmers, frightened with their work,  
Together homeward plod.

The droning of a torrent bright  
Is heard adown the hill;  
A cockle near the fountain urn  
Is calling with a will.  
Within, where savory pipkin hangs  
O'er fragrant blazing high,  
The tidy housewife marks with joy  
The autumn fruits laid by.

With winter joys we've winter ill,  
With winter ill we've joy;  
With God protecting us we've peace,  
And love without alloy.

## Pacific Pete,

The Prince of the Revolver.

BY JOSEPH E. BADGER, JR.,

AUTHOR OF "OLD BULL'S-EYE," "YELLOW-STONE JACK," ETC.

### CHAPTER XXI.

A FORCED CONFIDENCE.

"OPEN your mouth wide enough to let out a pig's whisker, and I'll chew ye up like a ripe papaw!"

Old Business, as he pressed the point of his knife against the Mexican's jugular until the bright blood trickled down in a little rill. "You give one yelp, an' off ye go to glory by express—you hear me?"

There appeared to be but little danger of the man's crying out, loud enough to attract the attention of Eli Brand, who was just disappearing from view among the crags. Though a stout enough man to all appearance, the Mexican was handled by Old Business like a very baby. Even in the few seconds that those bony fingers had closed around his throat, the wretch turned black in the face, his eyes protruding and bloodshot, his tongue lolling far from his distended jaws.

"You mean to kill him?" muttered Pike, who, now that Eli Brand had vanished, came forward. "If you don't wouldn't it be jest as well that you let up a bit on that squeezein' machine o' yours?"

"Good enough! pard—I don't want to kill the varmint just yet, but ye see, I was so bad skeered I didn't rightly know what I was doin' of. But thar—we've ketcherd our fish; the next thing's to git away with him."

"I don't see what ye want with him—a dirty, buggy, no 'ount Greaser! Ef 'twas that Eli Brand—"

"It'd be so much the better—yes. But this draw's better'n nothin'. You've larnt some thint', to-day, old man, but you haven't got past your a-b-ab's yit. Make haste—cut off some o' this fellow's duds—never mind whether it's clean or not; the stronger it is the better it'll gag 'im."

Though his tongue wagged freely, Old Business was not idle. Pulling down the gasping wretch's chin, he crammed a handful of greasy cloth into his mouth, keeping the gag in place by binding a stout strip around his head. Another strip secured his hands firmly behind his back. His throat freed, this rude usage seemed to revive the captive, but his struggles were quickly quieted by a significant motion of Old Business.

"Ef you ain't pertickler 'bout keepin' the roof on your skull, jest keep a 'doin' that. You kin kick your way to glory in jest three shakes, ef ye like. Now, bess, just pitch your jinney!"

The cold muzzle of the trailer's revolver was pressed against the captive's temple, and there was a wicked light in the old man's eyes that forbade the idea of his jesting. A grim smile parted his lips as the Mexican turned a sickly pale, and quieted his limbs, all except a convulsive trembling.

"That's right—you kin take a hint, I see. Now jest one word more. You've got to go 'long o' us, fer a little ways. I'll be easier fer all of us, ef you walk like a white man. Yeees, I don't think it overly safe, in these parts—the air ain't healthy for our constitution. Jest so, boss," and Old Business chuckled grimly as he read aright the quick glitter in the captive's eye. "You're a smart cuss, an' nobody's fool, so I'll speak plain with ye. You don't know it, mebbe, but you're a tickler friend o' ours; so much so that I really b'lieve I'd kill ye afore givin' ye up. It's quite like you've got 'quaintances in these parts. Then, ef you like livin', jest pray your level best that they don't take it into their fool heads to call on ye while you're in our company. We'd give ye up, in course, 'cause we're polite—the politest galoots you ever see! But I don't reckon you'd ever know what they wanted o' ye—unless they could talk spirit talk. You understand?"

The captive did understand; that was quite evident. He saw that the trailer, though so loquacious, was speaking in sober, deadly earnest. And now, instead of hoping that some of his friends might put in an appearance, he prayed with all his soul that nothing of the kind might occur.

"Give him a lift, old man," said the trailer, to Pike, who had stood impatiently by. "Walk him off up the holler a mile or so. I don't think we're in safe quarters here. I'll keep a

eye out fer breakers. You just 'tend to him. Ef he tries to double or cut up any didoes, sock it to 'im, an' make sure work."

Pike walked beside the Mexican, with ready pistol. Old Business kept a few paces in the rear, his keen glance roving in every direction. There was a stern, exultant light in his expression not all produced by the capture of his prisoner, though in that he considered a strong point had been made. It was as though he had made some important discovery—had gained a prize long and wearily watched for.

"That'll do, I reckon," said Old Business, when considerably over a mile had been traversed. "Turn in here; it's a nice, quiet spot fer our little 'museum'."

Diverging from the valley, the trio passed into a narrow, high-walled "pocket" or *cul de sac*, the existence of which could hardly be suspected from the outside, so completely was the entrance masked with vine-wreathed shrubs. Within, close to the towering gray rocks, was a small patch of open ground covered with a soft carpet of rich, thick grass. Upon this Pike seated his captive, with more rapidity than grace or ceremony, simply knocking his feet from beneath him. This accomplished to his satisfaction, he turned and spoke to Old Business for the first time since the capture.

"I don't like to 'pear 'quintive, pard—you're runnin' this machine, an' I'm only a deck hand, which is good enough an' proper, fur as it goes. But—ain't we wasted 'most time enough over this brute? You know, Mark—"

"I knowed it—I've seed it in your eyes this last half 'hour," chuckled Old Business. "You're a good man, Lengthy. You know how to 'bey orders chuck up to the handle. But you hain't got the 'ventive facility which makes a man a slap-up gen'us like—waal, I don't reckon I'll mention any names—a man kin be smart an' modest both. Le' me see—what was I oh—a slap-up gen'us which kin—"

The trailer's speech was abruptly cut short. A sound came from without—a heavy foot-fall. With a significant motion toward the captive, Old Business glided toward the mouth of the pocket, passing through the dense shrubbery with scarcely more noise than would have followed the passage of a bodiless shadow. Pike crouched beside the captive, a keen knife-point pressed against his throat, while holding a revolver in readiness for use.

A few moments of breathless suspense—an age of agony to the captive—and then Old Business reappeared, supreme disgust deeply imprinted upon his rugged features. Leaning against the rock, dashing his ragged hat to the ground, the old trailer went through a series of complicated gesticulations, his features working wildly, his lips moving like those of an orator thoroughly warmed to his work.

Pike stared in open-mouthed astonishment, not unmixed with alarm. For the moment he half-believed his partner had gone crazy.

"Thar—I feel better now!" gasped Old Business, wiping his heated brow.

"What on airth was ye doin', anyhow?"

"Cussin'—that's all. I knowed wouldn't do justice to the subject, so I jest went through the motions—feel a heap better, too," chuckled Old Business.

"I thought ye'd gone crazy—nurr I ain't sure—"

"Wasn't it enough? Didn't we get skeered out o' ten y'ars growth, thinkin' the hull raft o' them 'orn' galoots had corraled us? Didn't I snake out thar, a-tremblin in my boots like I hed the buck-ager, bad? An' didn't I see—jist think of it, sweet Cornelle! Nothin' but a durned, ornery, lap-eared, stump-tailed, three-legged jassack! Wouldn't that make a dead preacher course blue, red, an' yellow? Somebody kin see—do! I'm too durned smart to live—I be!"

Pike smiled, but 'twas only for a moment. He could not rest easy for thinking of poor Mark. Old Business read his expression aright, and changed instantly into the stern man of business. Squatting beside the captive, he spoke as follows, in remarkably pure Spanish, that the man might have no excuse for not comprehending him.

"Friend, you see this knife? Well, if you raise your voice louder than mine while speaking to you, I'll have to slit your throat. Now I free your mouth, because I want you to answer my questions. Mind, I don't intend to ask you the same question twice. If you refuse to answer, or attempt to deceive me, I shall kill you, that instant. Now—what did that man—Eli Brand—bid you do? Be careful; I heard enough of your conversation to tell whether you speak the truth."

The man, his voice trembling with fear, replied, but so incoherently that the substance alone need be given here. He had been ordered to hasten at once to Windy Gap, there to find Juan Cabrera; to bid him, from the chief, send word to all of their friends, far and wide, to hasten to the rendezvous. Above all he was to keep a close watch for an old man who was known as Old Business, for whose head fifty ounces would be paid.

"Good—so far. Now for this chief of yours—this Vincente Barada. He is an old friend of mine. I am the man who broke up the band at Wild Cat. I remember you, though you have forgotten me. Tell me, where is this rendezvous? the signs, passwords, and all?"

The captive remained silent, a dogged, sullen light in his eyes. Old Business pressed the knife closer, until its point was stained with blood; but the Mexican never flinched. The trailer smiled grimly.

"One. Now tell me; two of my friends were taken last night, by Barada's band—a lady and a gentleman. Where are they kept?"

"I don't know—if I did, 'twould be the same. You will learn nothing more from me—though I had a thousand lives and you were to torture me to death as often," quietly replied the outlaw.

"You are a brave man, friend; what a pity you are not half as sensible! It hurts me to insist, but unfortunately I have no choice. Pike, old man, and he resumed his usual manner of speech. "You take an' gag this cuss. He must tell us, ef I hev to tortur' him."

Helplessly bound and gagged, the captive writhed with agony, as the trailer, cold and stern as death, slowly circled his knife around the man's skull, then jerked up the loosened scalp for several inches. It was more than human nature could endure, and the captive looked his willingness to confess. Instantly the gag was removed.

He said that two captives had been taken; that they were confined somewhere among the hills. More than that he could not say. Until yesterday, he had never been in the neighborhood—nor had he been allowed to enter the retreat. He had heard of the capture, but had seen neither of the young people.

"I thank you, friend," said the trailer, when convinced that nothing more could be learned. "I will prove my gratitude. You must

die, but I will give you a chance for life. If you can kill me, you may go free—I pledge my honor to that. Do your best—I am no child."

Greatly to Pike's astonishment, Old Business set the captive free, and gave him the miner's knife. It was to be a duel to the death. The Mexican crouched low down, then bounded forward like a panther. The blades met—struck fire in showers. Then—with a double feint and stroke so rapid that the eye could not follow the weapon, Old Business buried his knife to the hilt in the Mexican's breast. Without a groan he fell back, dead.

### CHAPTER XXII.

A SCORNED WOMAN'S REVENGE.

WHETHER the period covered by his unconsciousness was to be estimated by minutes, hours or days, Mark Austin had not the slightest idea, when he opened his eyes and stared around him with the dazed, bewildered look so natural under the circumstances. Nor was his wonder at all appeased by his surroundings.

He was lying upon a soft couch, which yielded to his every motion as though composed of eiderdown instead of softly tanned furs. A subdued light—more like that of the full moon than of mortal contrivance—rendered the surrounding objects indistinctly visible.

He seemed to be in a high, vaulted chamber, the walls of which were hung with robes of fur, curtains of silk, and other material. This much he took in at a single glance, then a sharp cry of surprise broke from his lips, and he started half erect, as a soft voice spoke his name, and a dazlingly beautiful face appeared close beside his couch.

"You are not afraid of me?" continued the voice. "Ah, you remember how we parted—I hoped you would have forgotten. I was wrong—I was half crazy, then, I believe; at any rate I am sorry for my passionate words, and I beg you will forget and forgive."

Mark could scarce believe his eyes; and yet there could be no mistake. There could not be two such faces, such forms. It was, indeed, Isabella Keyes, the sister of Pacific Pete. Yet how—? She read his wonder in his eyes, and with a bright smile lightly placed one finger-tip upon his lips.

"Wait—I know what you would ask, but you are too weak for much talk. Be satisfied that you are among friends—friends who would die before letting harm come to you. You believe me?"

She looked wondrously beautiful as she knelt beside his couch of furs, beneath the soft light of the perfumed lamp. Her dress was a marvel of richness and beauty, a mass of rare silk and foamy lace, thickly sprinkled with brilliant. The rich, heavy mass of hair hung below her waist, confined only by a coronet of precious stones, set in dull, lusterless gold. The magnificent, half-valued bust rising and falling beneath a necklace of diamonds—jewels in her ears, everywhere, sparkling and glowing in the lamplight until the enchantment seemed all fire, all passion—yet with a dreamy, voluptuous glamor over all that few men could have resisted—few men but would have bared their souls for it, and, losing all else, have deemed themselves still the winner.

"Come, you should not be so revengeful," softly added Isabella, drawing still nearer, until her warm breath fanned the young miner's cheek. "Say that you have forgiven my foolish threats—that we are good friends once more."

"They were forgotten as soon as spoken, lady," replied Mark, in a cold tone. "But tell me, what is this place? I remember being attacked and shot or knocked senseless; all after that is like a dream, until I awoke here. What am I to think—am I a prisoner?"

"Alas! yes," sighed Isabella, dropping her eyes. "You have made many enemies, though you may have done so unwittingly; enemies who scruple at nothing. Only for my pleading you would have been killed; but I pledged my word—"

"It was kind, but foolish. I make no compact with villains who make war on women—who wrong those miles above them in everything pure and holy. Surely you have no sympathy with such vagabonds? Then tell me, what have they done with her?"

"Who do you mean?" asked Isabella, drawing back.

"Edna—Miss Brand. I saw them and her—it was while following the scoundrels in hopes of aiding her that I was taken prisoner."

"You feel a deep interest in this—person?"

"An interest! I love her better than my own soul!" impulsively cried Mark, his eyes aglow.

"And you say this to me—to me, after all that has passed between us. Fool—fool! you will always be blind—don't you see that you are driving me to ruin and wretchedness for us both? I have fought until I am struggle no longer. Have mercy on me—have mercy on us all—see, I ask it on my knees!"

"I don't understand you," muttered Mark, uneasily.

"Will not, you mean?" cried Isabella, passionately. "Very well; we will fence without the buttons, then. Now, listen to me—"

"You remember what passed between us at Windy Gap. I was a fool—admitted. Yet what I said there I repeat now. I love you!—my God! how I love you! In your arms, with your lips upon mine—as they were once—I could die without a pang. No, not that; I could not die and leave you, if you loved me. But I could stab you to the heart, and then die upon your bosom, kissing you and telling my love with my last breath. Now can you understand me when I say that I love you? Ah, how weak and feeble are words when one wishes to express passion such as mine!"

Mark ventured no reply. He knew not what to say, and, remembering what a frightful fit of rage his words at their last meeting had caused her, did not care about repeating the experiment.

"You don't answer me—I know what that means. You prefer this doll-faced girl to me; you would rather be her slave than my master. Bah! to think that I should be such a weak, silly fool as to think twice of a man like that—a man, did I say? No, a boy; a milk and water nonentity. And yet—I can't help it—I love you, Mark, I love you!"

"Then why am I treated like this?" cried Austin, impulsively, his face flushed. "Though my love was twice as strong for you as that which you profess to feel for me, I'd die ten times over rather than acknowledge it while kept a prisoner. There—I know what you would say; that I am unbound, that I have no guards—in sight. Yet I know that I am a captive, and in whose hands, too?"

"Sh!" and Isabella touched her lips as she glanced quickly around, as though fearful of being overheard. "That speech would cost your life, were it overheard. Keep a guard upon your tongue, I pray you. And now—you are a captive; that I admit. But I can set you free—will, on conditions. Wait, hear me out; then you can accept or reject."

"Like magic the scene changed. The men sprung erect, each hand grasping a weapon. The chief adroitly clasped a black mask over his face, then advanced toward the entrance.

"A stranger, master," uttered a tall man, as he humbly uncovered before the outlaw leader. "He flung down his arms, and said that he was seeking you, in hopes of employment. As he seemed to know all about the retreat, we thought it best to bring him in for you to decide."

"Right enough, Wister. Bring him here, and watch me close. If I make the old signal—you remember it! If I move my hand thus, you know what I expect."

Wister bowed low in silence, then glided away, returning the next moment with the stranger, upon whom all eyes were now riveted with curiosity.

They saw a tall, erect figure, a model of symmetry, dressed in a rich and picturesque suit of velvet and broadcloth—the dress of a wealthy ranchero. As he stood before the

"First, to prove that I do not overrate your danger. You are in the secret rendezvous of the band of—well, call them 'road agents,' that name is significant, and yet is not too grating. This band is under the command of Vincente Barada. You have met him under a different cloak—as the gambler and sport, Pacific Pete. Wait—I am telling you the truth; my brother is indeed the celebrated outlaw, whose name is only second to that of the great, the daring, matchless Joaquin Murietta."

Mark listened in mute amazement, scarce able to believe his ears. Yet there was an accent of truth in the woman's voice that carried conviction with it.

"I tell you this, because you will never repeat it. If you ever see the light of day again, 'twill be as an ally of ours. I have been candid with you, so you can see that I promise nothing beyond my power—that I threaten no more than I can perform. Promise me that you will forget this girl; that you will never seek to meet her, never speak to her, even if you should chance to meet. Promise to accept my love—I don't ask you to love me in return, at first; it will come in time. I will make you love me, if I only have the chance. See—I am rich. I can load you down with diamonds and precious stones. I can give you gold by the mule-load. All this I will give you—together we will go far away, leaving the past behind us, thinking only of the present, living only for each other; we will be happy as the day is long!"

"A charming picture, truly," said Mark, with a half sneer. "Of course, it has two sides; now for the other."

"It has—a black one," and there was a great change in the passionate pleader of a moment since; her face was white, her eyes cold and hard, her voice sharp and ringing. "If you refuse, listen. I will first strike at your heart. Edna Brand is here, in my power. One of the band—a handsome, reckless devil, whose soul is stained with every sin in the Decalogue—has taken a fancy to her. If you refuse, I will give her over to him. Bah!" she cried, scornfully, as Mark sprung up with an angry cry, "you think to threaten me? Strike—I am only a woman, but I am not a woman such as you are!"

Mark sunk back upon the couch, with a stifled curse. Isabella smiled, like a beautiful demon, then continued:

"That will be her fate—imagine how delightful! We will have a glorious revel over the affair—a fit celebration for the joyous mating. But there—you do not seem to appreciate my efforts to amuse you, so I will leave the rest to your imagination."

"This is her part in the drama; now for yours. I have thought it all carefully over. Come with me, please accept my arm; no! Well, have your own way. I can bear even this mortification. Thanks to your lessons, I am growing quite thick-skinned," and she laughed, a low, mocking peal, that caused Mark to shudder with a vague dread, despite his strong nerves.

Isabella drew aside one of the silk curtains, revealing a low, narrow aperture in the rock wall. Passing through, Mark found himself in a small, dimly-lighted apartment or cell, with walls of solid rock, as he seemed.

The woman took down the rude lamp from its niche in the wall, and stooping, motioned Mark to her side.

"Look down," she said, holding the light so as to reveal a black pit before them. "Now listen."

She held a stone over the abyss, then dropped it. Nearly a minute passed without any sound of its touching bottom. Isabella smiled coldly, as she spoke:

"A man would have time to think over all his evil deeds, before reaching bottom, don't you think so? Now, I ask you once more, and for the last time: do you accept or refuse my proposal? Remember, not only your own life depends upon your answer, but that of Edna Brand as well. Choose between me—"

Mark. "I would sooner hug a rattlesnake to my bosom, than you."

"Then die—fool that you are!" shrieked the infuriated woman, as she dropped the lamp and sprang against the young miner, with a force that seemed superhuman.

A brief struggle; then the ground seemed to give way beneath him. A shrill, piercing cry—then all was still.

### CHAPTER XXIII.

MARCO OF THE SCAR.

The flickering lights burned dimly, casting weird, dancing shadows over the whole scene.

A large, irregularly-shaped chamber, its sides of rock, here and there reflecting back the red torchlight with a dull glitter, amid the dazlingly brilliant points of quartz, speaking of gold in a tongue that is seldom mistaken. The dome-shaped roof is high, smoke-stained and gloomy. Here and there along the walls are darker spots, marking the entrance to long, intricate passages winding into the bowels of that honey-combed mountain, or else opening upon some smaller chamber.

The red light shines down upon a boisterous and not unpicturesque crowd. Men from nearly every nation under the sun, from the Brazilian negro to the fair-haired German, the massive-limbed Norseman, to the dapper little Frenchman, with all the intermediate links—a band with only one thing in common; the fraternity of crime.

A lithe, graceful figure paused at the mouth of one of the passages, and gazed around upon the little groups of men as they caroused, played cards or smoked in lazy content. A ray of red light fell athwart his face, revealing the broad, white forehead, the lustrous eyes, the handsome features of the man who called himself Pacific Pete—now seen in his true colors, the celebrated outlaw chief, Vincente Barada, whose name was second only in the annals of California to that of the notorious Joaquin.

A low, peculiar whistle sounded from without. Like magic the scene changed. The men sprung erect, each hand grasping a weapon. The chief adroitly clasped a black mask over his face, then advanced toward the entrance.

"A stranger, master," uttered a tall man, as he humbly uncovered before the outlaw leader. "He flung down his arms, and said that he was seeking you, in hopes of employment. As he seemed to know all about the retreat, we thought it best to bring him in for you to decide."

"Right enough, Wister. Bring him here, and watch me close. If I make the old signal—you remember it! If I move my hand thus, you know what I expect."

Wister bowed low in silence, then glided away, returning the next moment with the stranger, upon whom all eyes were now riveted with curiosity.

They saw a tall, erect figure, a model of symmetry, dressed in a rich and picturesque suit of velvet and broadcloth—the dress of a wealthy ranchero. As he stood before the

masked outlaw, the stranger removed his sombrero, and bowed low, then drew himself erect and cast a swift glance around upon the motley crowd.

His hair, long and glossy, hung over his shoulders in slightly curling locks. A drooping mustache concealed his mouth. His features seemed regular, and would have been deemed handsome, only for the long, purple scar that crossed his face from left temple to right cheek.

"You wished to see me, senior?" softly demanded Pacific Pete.

"If you are Vincente Barada—yes. I am seeking a man to serve under. Since the death of the great Joaquin—Mother of Sorrows receive his soul! Since he, my captain, was murdered, there is only one man left whom I call master," replied the stranger, in a deep, unpleasant voice.

"Do you know what and who this Barada is?"

"I know that he is a man—true to the core. That is enough for me. I, too, am a man. Since '42 I have been on the road, since '50 a member of Joaquin's band. There are nine different prices set upon my head. Since that black day—may lightning wither the hand that laid low the bravest, the truest heart that ever throbbed against wrong and injustice! Since that day I have played a lone hand. I have drank deep of vengeance, but now—I need rest, and help. I sought you out—a friend at Wild Cat gave me the clue. I came here—I offer you my services. If you accept them, good; you will never regret doing so."

"What is your name? I must have heard of it, since you have played such a bold part."

"You see this?" and the man laughed harshly as he touched the livid scar. "I received that on the day Joaquin died. They call me Marco of the Scar, now. Before that, they called me Firebrand."

"Report said that Firebrand died with Joaquin."

"From this touch it came. I lay two days and nights like a dead man. A 'John' found that I was alive. He dragged me away, nursed and brought me around, in time. I didn't care about leaving my secret behind me, so—well, 'John' was only a piece of broken china, when I took to the road once more."

This cold confession seemed to strike the outlaws favorably, and a little murmur of admiration ran round the circle, until quelled by a gesture from Pacific Pete.

"Your story is a straight one; still, my band is very select. None are admitted but those who can prove themselves worthy in every respect. Now, what can you do?"

"Leaving my chief out of the question, I can do anything that any man can—and just a little better than the best," was the modest reply. "But words are not proof. You know your men, and what they are capable of doing. Select them for their skill in any particular line, and if I do not at least equal each and every one, I will forfeit my head. 'Twill bring you at least five hundred ounces at Frisco."

"Indeed! If you are as expert in everything else as you are with your tongue, Sir Marco, I fear we will all have to bow down and worship you as a demi-god," sneered Pacific Pete. "Still, you shall have your way. In everything, you said?"

"Yes, my captain," was the quiet reply. "We'll adjourn to the open air, then. Lamp-light is not just the thing for near work."

Followed by the eager crowd, which, however, was kept in wonder and subjection by the mere presence of their master and chief, they passed out upon the broad, level ledge of rock that extended along the side of the mountain. Without a word Pacific Pete held out his hand and Wister placed in his grasp a heavy revolver. Glancing around for a mark, the outlaw chief leveled his weapon and rapidly emptied the six chambers at a small tree that grew little less than a hundred yards distant. The party could distinguish the little patch of shattered bark that marked the first shot, then another and another, until the six bullets were planted so closely together that the crown of a hat might have covered them all.

"A man would stand but little show with you for an antagonist, captain," said Marco, quietly. "Unfortunately you have selected my best card—if it was worth while being proud of anything in this world, I would feel proud of my marksmanship. Friend," he added, turning to Wister, "will you loan me the mate to that weapon? Mine have been confiscated, I guess. Thanks. Now, captain—and you, gentlemen; you see the first limb of that tree? Watch the first bend in it. That elbow is two inches thick—I'll cut it through."

Firing rapidly, yet with evident care, the candidate actually succeeded in accomplishing the feat, incredible as it may seem to those who have not been raised with a firearm in their hands. As the limb slowly bent over and then fell, completely severed, a wild yell of admiration went up from the motley crowd. Of them all, Pacific Pete alone seemed displeased.

"I acknowledge my defeat, for once. But your skill in this respect only makes me more curious to see you in other feats. You understand knife-play?"

"I was Joaquin's pupil, and in a fair match I made Three-fingered Jack—Mannuel Garcia, you know—acknowledge himself defeated."

"Good! we will have some sport, then. 'Twill look better by lamplight; come," and Pacific Pete re-entered the cavern, followed by the others.

At a signal from his chief, a wiry, active-looking half-breed threw aside his outer garments, and stood ready for the struggle, knife in hand. Marco was more methodic, quietly laying aside his clothes as he said:

"The conditions, master



As though this was a signal, Marco assumed the offensive, and forced Chico slowly back until he was cornered against the wall. Then, with a couple of feints, so swift that the eye could not follow them, Marco plunged his knife to the very hilt in the half-breed's neck, the point ranging down and fairly piercing his heart.

"Only for his hot temper, the boy would have been a fair knife-player," said Marco, coolly, as he stepped back and quietly folded his arms.

"Dead—he never knew what hurt him!" muttered Wister, as he bent over and examined the body.

"You won't far enough, yet I'd almost as soon have received that blow myself," said the outlaw leader, in a cold, metallic tone. "My best scout and spy—well, such is life! How is it, fellows—are we to acknowledge Senior Marco as our master?"

"Call and-elbow," said he, "don't mind takin' a turn at 'im," cried out one of the men, and a heavy yet well-built man stepped forward.

"Anything to please the children," laughed the man with the scar. "Play light, old man—you've got my weak point now. I am better with the fists than at this work."

"I'm the bye for yez at that game, too, honey," grinned the Celt, as they carefully secured their grips.

The struggle was more even this time, yet it was evident to all that "Call-and-elbow" had found his match, if not superior. Then the Celt gave a little cry of triumph. He had succeeded in getting in his favorite "lock," and considered a victory assured. But Marco suddenly broke the lock, bowed his head, and with an effort that caused every muscle to crack, lifted his antagonist up and flung him heavily over his head. The fall was a square one, both shoulders touching the ground.

"Who comes next?" cried Marco, flushed, yet breathing evenly despite the long and trying struggle. "I've got my hand in, and don't care what you try me at. Anything—anything! What! not one man in all this crowd with confidence enough in himself to give me a trial?"

"The devil himself wouldn't tackle you after seeing you perform, comrade," cried Wister, bluntly, as he grasped the scarred man's hand and wrung it warmly.

"You have done enough for one day, Senior Marco," said the chief, though coldly. "You are a worthy addition to our band, and we will swear you in to-night. If you accept the conditions, well and good; if you will never regret doing so. If not—"

"Well—if not?" asked Marco, as the chief paused.

"There is no alternative. No man can enter here without becoming one of us, or—dying. You understand?"

"Is this a threat, Senior Barada?"

"No—a caution. Wister, a word with you," and he drew his follower aside, yet speaking in a tone distinctly audible to the new recruit. "Double the guards—keep a close look-out. Suffer no one to leave the cavern without he can show my pass. There's mischief in the wind!"

(To be continued—commenced in No. 296.)

## GRANDPA'S THOUGHTS.

BY JOHNNIE DABB.

Old grandpa sat by the cosy fire  
With his "spec" upon his nose.  
As the red flame mounted higher and higher  
The old man began to doze.  
When Nellie, his darling, came along  
With a merry laugh and rippling song,  
Seeing her grandpa fast asleep,  
Fair Nellie, on mischief bound,  
First took a peep from out the door,  
Then crept without a sound,  
And thought to fright him with quick surprise;  
But the old man laughed with open eyes.  
"Of what were you thinking, grandpa mine?"  
Said Nell, as she crept up on his knee;  
"Were you thinking of the olden time  
When you sailed upon the sea?"  
Or, perhaps, of the days of your manhood life  
When you won my grandpa to be your wife?  
"Or, perhaps, you were thinking of days gone by  
When you was a little lad;  
Saw grandpa, did what makes you sigh—  
And why do you look so sad?"  
Now, grandpa, come; don't be a tease,  
But tell me—what were you thinking, please?"  
"Well, well," said grandpa, with laughing eye,  
"I'll tell you then, my pet;  
Now listen, and hear the story true:  
Be sure that you don't forget!  
I know, my darling, you'll think it queer;  
I was thinking—'t's time to have my beer!'"

## Nick Whiffles' Pet:

NED HAZEL, THE BOY TRAPPER.

BY CAPT. J. F. C. ADAMS.

## PART II.

## CHAPTER I.

## FOUR YEARS AFTERWARD.

FOUR years have passed, and the short, beautiful summer of the North-west has again folded mountain, prairie and stream in its loving embrace. The sky is clear and bright with sunshine, the streams, except among the mountains, are free from ice, and the face of nature is very different from what would be expected so soon after such severe weather.

In front of a rough, grotesque cabin, which has already been described to my reader, sits Nick Whiffles, cleaning his rifle. Although four years have passed since we last saw him, there is scarcely any perceptible difference in his appearance. In the grizzled beard which covers the greater part of his face, there may be seen a few more straggling hairs, but that is all. The eye is just as bright, the step as firm and powerful, and the smile as genial as ever. He is dressed in the same hunter costume, and so far as he is concerned, it seems that a few days only have passed since his participation in the rescue of Hugh Bandman and the Phantom Princess.

A short distance away, the rotund, sleek-looking Shagbark is browsing the rich, succulent grass, and at the side of his master, with his nose between his legs, dozes his dog, Calamity.

Four years have made their mark in the career of Calamity, although he still bears up well under them. He is somewhat unweildy in his movements, and has become quite fond of basking in the warm sunlight, and of sleeping by the blazing fire during the terrible cold of winter. Perhaps he is a little more surly to strangers, too, and is disposed to resent undue familiarity upon the part of any one. But he loves Nick well, and his dangerously-sharp teeth are ready to be used in his service at any time.

The old hunter seems to be in a reverie this afternoon, and his motions in cleaning his weapon are almost mechanical, his thoughts being far away on different matters altogether.

Suddenly he stops polishing the already-

gleaming rifle-barrel that is stretched across his knees, and with one hand pressing down and grasping it, and shoving his coin-cup cap back from his forehead with the other, he exclaims:

"I s'wore to gracious! if it ain't four years ago this very summer sin' Ned left me, with his father, and with Hugh and his wife. I left the little gal behind them, and that same gal has grown into one of the purdest creatures that a man ever set eyes on."

At this point one of his broad smiles illuminated his face, and he added in a confidential tone to himself:

"I wonder, now, of I was a mind, ef I couldn't raise a condemned difficulty there. No one dare say I ain't handsome, and then I've heard tell of folks gettin' married as old as my father would be ef he were living to-day."

He smiled a few moments in the enjoyment of his own fancy, and then his face became sober again.

"No; the day has gone by fur Nick Whiffles to think of such things. He is married to the woods, and peraries, and mountains, but Miona, if Ned hasn't forgot his promise, it'll pay him to come on here to see her. It's about a month sin' I was through the village, and she looked purty nough to fly off like an angel. She hasn't forgot Ned, neither, and axed me about him; but I couldn't tell her nothin'. All I know is that Ned and his old man went to England, as they call it, in the same vessel that carried Hugh and the Phantom. There's been a trapper down here every spring to ax about the gal, that I s'pose Hugh and his wife sent, and there's no danger of their forgetting her—Hello!"

At this juncture, Calamity threw up his head, pricked up his ears, and uttered a growl—an indication that some stranger was at hand. Almost instinctively Nick grasped his rifle, and looked inquiringly in the direction indicated by the dog.

"What is it, pup?" he demanded, in an undertone; "any call for powder and ball?"

The reply speedily came. The crackling of the undergrowth was heard, and the next moment a young man in the jaunty costume of an English sportsman stepped into the clearing. He wore the velvet cap, coat and vest, the high-topped boots, the leather covering the knees, the powder-flask at the side, and the richly-mounted rifle of the professional hunter of civilization, and there was an ease and self-possession in his manner acquired only by long and genuine practice in hunting game.

The countenance of the young man was frank and prepossessing, with his dark, hazel eyes, the ruddy, rose-tinted cheeks, and their soft "mutton-chop" whiskers. He was of a muscular mold, and would have pulled a good stroke with the famed Oxford crew of his own country.

He paused a moment in front of the hunter, and then, with beaming face, walked rapidly toward him, holding out his hand.

"How do you do, my old friend! God bless you, Nick Whiffles, have you forgotten Ned Hazel?"

Nick mechanically took the proffered hand, rose slowly to his feet, and with open mouth stared at the young man in a dazed sort of way, as though he did not understand what it all meant.

"What's the matter, Nick? Have I changed so much that you don't know me? Why, I knew you the minute I placed my eyes on you," continued the sportsman, laughing in a way that showed his handsome white teeth, while he shook the hand of the trapper with such violence that his whole body partook of the vibration.

"Thunderation!" finally gasped Nick; "can it be possible? Are you my own Ned? Why, you was a boy when you left me, and I've been thinking of you as the same boy ever since."

"I was over fifteen then; now I am nearly twenty. Is there anything wonderful in that?"

"Wonderful—I never seed any thing like it. What do you weigh?"

"Only a hundred and seventy-five."

"Thirty pound more than I do; let me take a nearer look at you," continued Nick, scrutinizing his face very closely. "There's them hazel eyes, sartin, just as bright and purty as they was when they looked at me from the bottom of the canoe, sixteen or seventeen years ago. Lift your cap that I may see your forehead a little better."

The young man removed his cap entirely, and stood in a smiling but meek attitude before the sorely puzzled trapper.

"Your hair is as soft and silky as it was then, your eyebrows are the same, and there's the scar where the grizzly bar nipped you with his nail, and your cheeks are as red as ever, but them condemned whiskers, they spile you."

"I fancied they were rather becoming," said the young man, with a rueful face, as he caressed them with his hand; "however, Nick, do you still doubt my identity?"

"No; I b'leve you're the giniwine animle, and well shake hands ag'in on it. God be thanked, Ned, I'm glad to see you. Set down, set down; Calamity don't know yer, although he's eying you purty sharp."

"How are you, pup?" said Ned, turning toward the dog and patting his head.

Perhaps, away down in the lowermost depths of the memory of the animal was a dim, flickering shadow of the handsome individual before him, and a faint gleam of intelligence lit up the eye of Calamity as he gazed at him. At any rate he knew he was the friend of his master. That was sufficient, and seating himself upon his haunches, he gazed contentedly upon the two men.

The two friends sat down on the log, side by side, and Ned said:

"Before going any further, Nick, let me ask you when you saw Miona last?"

"A short month ago, and she was as well and purty as ever; but, how is it, yez're here, Ned? You was to wait five years, and that won't be till another winter has come and gone."

"You're right, Nick; but, do you suppose I could content myself any laster from her any longer? I did my best; I have been to school and studied hard; indeed, I am by no means through with my schooling yet. I finally told the folks that I couldn't stand it any longer, and they gave their consent; so I took the first ship for Fort Churchill; Bandman and his wife came with me, so as to be here to meet us. I reached the fort about a month ago, and found a small party just getting ready to start for Oregon. As I was pretty well known at head-quarters, I was given charge of the half-dozen men, and began working our way down to this point. We intend to visit the village, if it is safe, and barter with them; but, of course, I couldn't pass anywhere near you without stopping to see you, and then, before I go near the place, I want to learn how the land lies, and to engage you to accompany us."

"Where are the men?"

"A number of miles up the river; I came on ahead, and made an appointment to meet

them to-morrow morning near the bend; so I am going to spend the afternoon and night with you."

"I only wish it was going to be a year," remarked Nick, with a tremulous voice. "I've been counting the months I would have to wait for you, and I never dreamed you war goin' to cut 'em short by a whole year."

"But you ain't sorry, I am sure," exclaimed Ned, in his hearty way, as he struck his hand upon the knee of the smiling trapper. "I have been in correspondence with Miona ever since I left. It takes a long time for a letter to go from here to London and back again, and we didn't average many a year; but Mrs. Bandman had an arrangement by which we knew when to send, and when to expect letters."

"I know they get letters at the fort from England, but how did they send 'em down here?"

"There was a hunter—Tim Nevins—who was employed to pass between the village and the fort, and he did his duty well. So, you see, I am here, and before we talk of old times, my best and truest of friends, tell me all you know about the darling of my heart. You have just told me she is well, and handsome, of course, but is she treated with consideration and respect among the Indians?"

"The same as she allers was."

"She doesn't expect me, because I wanted to surprise her; but when I was on my voyage across the Atlantic, a strange fear came over me. It occurred to me that such a beautiful and good woman as Miona must be admired among the Indians, and it is no more than likely that she has several dusky lovers, who are looking hopefully forward to the time when she is to become a wife."

Nick Whiffles turned and looked sharply in the face of his young friend, and then answered, in a startling voice:

"You're right!"

"Explain!" commanded Ned, turning pale.

"I've a suspicion of one man. That may be plenty of others—and I make no doubt that—that would give that heads for her, but that's only one that she need be afraid of, and that's Red Bear, the son of the old chief Wool-na."

"What about him?" demanded the lover, with a painful eagerness.

"Mind, the gal hasn't told me anything, but I s'picion, fact is, I'm sartin, that they've fixed that she shall be his squaw."

"In the face of the solemn agreement—"

"Mighty!" interrupted the trapper, "what's all the trainin' I give you amount to? Haven't you learned a red-skin's nature yet?"

"If they had given any reason to believe that they intended to keep their part of the agreement, none would be more conscientious in keeping mine; but, as they intend to perpetrate a great wrong, I shall now do my utmost to get her out of their hands, with as little delay as possible."

"You're right," said Nick, "and here's my hand upon it. We'll go down to the village together, and look round to see how things look, and arter that we'll fix the way we're goin' to act."

"There's no danger of my identity being suspected."

"Not much," laughed the trapper. "I don't b'leve the gal herself can be made to b'leve it's you till arter you've spent a week in swearin' to it, and then, arter all, she'll think it's your big brother."

"In that case, we will go together to the village. Oh! if I could but see her!" he exclaimed, springing up in his excitement. "One look, one glance at her—I would walk a thousand miles to get it."

"Praps you needn't go quite so far as that, though they're apt to keep her powerful shady when white folks ar' about."

They sat in delightful converse, until the evening was drawing to a close, when Nick looked up.

"It's gettin' dark, and we'll go in, take supper, and start bright and airy in the mornin'."

"Have you any traps set?"

"Yas; but they don't need lookin' arter, and we'll tend to 'em in the mornin'."

The two walked into the hermit-like residence, where they ate their old-fashioned supper together, and then followed a long talk, in which each gave the other the particulars of his life for the previous four years.

Finally they lay down and slept.

## CHAPTER II.

## WHERE WAS HE?

LONG before the sun was up, Nick Whiffles and Ned Mackintosh were astir. The old hunter had a number of traps, from which, during the winter, he managed to secure a most valuable lot of peltries. His experience and intimate knowledge of the country taught him where to search for the haunts of the otter and beaver, and he always had a nice little income from his furs, caught during the winter.

It was with strange emotions that the young man made his rounds of the traps. Everything looked familiar—the appearance of the trees and vegetation, the smell of the woods, the clear, stinging air—all revived powerfully the memories that had almost faded during the rush of events during the four years that had been spent in another hemisphere, and among scenes the very antipodes of these.

But here he had spent his childhood, and never could these scenes and incidents be forgotten.

In each of the half-dozen traps visited, was found a good plump beaver, every one of which was killed and dressed by Ned's own hand, and they reached the cabin again and made their breakfast upon the delicate tails of the creatures.

Then they took a half-hour's ramble in the woods, the young man bringing down an antelope with a skill which elicited the admiration of the veteran trapper, who declared it was done almost as neatly as he could have done it himself.

"I have kept my practice at home," replied Ned. "There our hunting is somewhat different from this, but both require good marksmanship, and I can never lose the taste I acquired for it under you; but my men will be at the bend and we have little time to lose."

Calling out a jocular farewell to Shagbark, lazily munching the grass, and accompanied by Calamity, who seemed to be unusually frisky this morning, Nick plunged into the woods, and led the way toward the river along which he had spent so many years of his life.

As they reached the bank, a long Indian canoe was found there, and the six men, upon being called, speedily made their appearance. They were hardy, brown-looking fellows, all acquainted with Nick and glad to meet him.

Courageous and fully armed, they had greater fear of the North-west men than they had of any Indians, and they made particular inquiries of Whiffles as to whether they were liable to encounter them on the river or not.

The trapper had seen and heard nothing of them during the spring, but he could not guarantee either their appearance or their non-

appearance at any time. So he advised the Hudson Bay men to be on the look-out.

Suspecting that they were in advance of the North-west traders, the little party pulled with a will down-stream. They were in too dangerous territory to fancy it much, and having no wish to have another collision with the members of the great rival company, of course they used every effort to make their stay as short as possible.

"Do you see that?" asked one of the trappers, as they stepped into the canoe, pointing at the same time to a rigid scar across the upper part of his nose. "Wal, one of them blamed Nor-westers done it, and as long as we've got such a small company, my advice is to steer clear of 'em."

They kept the keen "look-out" as they journeyed along, but were greatly relieved at the end of a couple of days, when they rounded to in front of the village, without meeting any other white men.

It was arranged that Nick Whiffles should act his old part of "go-between," or interpreter, Ned Mackintosh landing with him. The first person with whom they exchanged a word was Red Bear, who came to the water's edge with his father to meet them.

As may be supposed, the young lover scrutinized his savage rival with anything but amiable feelings.

"Confound him!" he muttered, as he glanced sideways at him; "it would do me good to bury three or four balls from my revolver in your skull. The idea of your presuming to the notice of my Miona!"

With a heart fluttering with hope, he looked here, there and everywhere in the hope of catching a glimpse of the girl herself, but not the first indication of her was discovered, and, at a sign from Nick, he withdrew, leaving him to carry on the interview alone.

While the bartering and exchange was going on, the old trapper stood apart talking earnestly with Wool-na and Red Bear.

Mackintosh feigned to take no notice of them, but, as may be supposed, his interest was no less than theirs; and when his friend came back to him, and they put out in the stream, he could scarcely restrain his impatience.

Nick speedily explained.

"I s'wore to gracious if I could hardly keep my hands off of both of them old rips!" he exclaimed, with considerable feeling.

"What did you say?"

"You know they've never objected to my seeing the gal, when I said for her. The first thing I done was to ax 'em to let her come down and have a word or two with me; (you see I wanted you to get a sight of her), and what do you think they said?"

"I am sure I cannot tell."

"That she was getting ready to git married to the scalawag of a Red Bear, and she hadn't time. It was mighty hard work when I heard that to keep from making a condemned difficulty with 'em, but I held in, and, just for the fun of the thing, axed 'em what they war goin' to do when the friends of the gal come arter her next spring. They said, that wouldn't make no difference. She was the pledged wife of Red Bear, and ef they made any muss, she'd be put in the Death Lodge, and there'd be the end of it."

Ned gnashed his teeth.

"Why didn't I shoot him at once! If I had known it, I couldn't have prevented myself."

"Hold on!" said Nick, with a fatherly wave of his hand. "I got mad enough for both of us. We've learned how the land lays, and now we'll go to work."

"Nick," said his young friend, after a few minutes' thought, "I feel that I can't go back without seeing Miona. As she is undoubtedly in the village, what is to prevent my getting out of the boat and going back and watching my opportunity?"

As may be supposed, the trapper opposed this, but the young fellow pleaded, and the old hunter, out of his great love, consented against his judgment, that the attempt should be made.

So, when they had ascended the river about a half-mile, and were beyond all sight of the village, he was put ashore.

It was about the middle of the afternoon, and the agreement was that Ned was to be on the spot by dark. He intended to approach as high the village as was safe, and there to wait in the hope of seeing her. If it were possible, he wished to communicate with her, apprising her of his presence, and what he and Nick proposed doing for her.

If he should fail to see her at all, he gave his promise to be at the spot by nightfall.

The traders had orders to continue on up the river and make all haste into British territory, where there was no danger of being molested by the dreaded Nor-westers.

Nick Whiffles, left alone with Calamity, sat down on the ground to await the return of his young friend with the stoical patience of an Indian himself.

Not until the night was considerably advanced did he feel any misgiving. Still he waited and listened, until at last, the gray light of morning lifted the woods, but still there was no Ned Mackintosh.

"What kin be the diffikity?" he muttered, as he and Calamity took the trail and followed it;

every Blackfoot this side the Rocky Mountains. Hyer's the trail of the lad as plain as day; take it, Calamity, and we'll follow it to the end. Ef he's in the wigwam of Wool-na or Red Bear, he's got to come out, and ef he's in that infernal Death Lodge, I'll burn it down, by mighty!"

The gray eyes of the trapper lit up with a furious gleam, and there was no mistaking his deadly earnestness, as with long strides he struck into the woods, following close to the dog, who, with nose to the ground, was on the trail of the young hunter, and keeping it with the certainty of a Siberian bloodhound.

But ah! a sudden "diffikity" presented itself; for scarce a hundred yards were passed, when he came to a small creek, the existence of which he had entirely forgotten. A short examination showed that Ned had entered a canoe, which was evidently lying there, and supposing he had crossed, Nick adjusted his rifle and swam over; but to his surprise there were no indications of the canoe having landed, either above or below the place.

He spent the entire day in searching the banks of the creek, following both sides up and down for fully a mile, and using Calamity to assist him. The result was nothing.

The second morning he visited the village, and day after day was spent in searching for his "dear Ned," dearer now than ever, and yet he obtained not the slightest clue.

He was completely baffled, felled, and finally in despair he turned his back upon the Blackfoot village and sought his lonely home in the wilderness, feeling as though it would be a relief to throw off the burden of life, and take his departure to his last resting-place.

But he could not content himself in idleness and he soon renewed the vain hunt.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 295.)

## COMMON SENSE VS. PREJUDICE.

By R. V. PIERCE, M. D., of the World's Dispensary, Buffalo, N. Y., Author of "The People's Common Sense Medical Adviser," etc., etc.

I am aware that there is a popular, and not altogether unfounded, prejudice against "patent medicines," owing to the small amount of merit which many of them possess. The appellation "Patent Medicine" does not apply to my remedies, as no patent has ever been asked for or obtained upon "cure-alls." They are simply some favorite proprietary medicines, which, in a very extensive practice, have proved their superior remedial virtues in the cure of the diseases for which they are recommended. Every practicing physician has his favorite remedies, which he oftenest recommends or uses, because he has the greatest confidence in their virtues. The patient does not know their true value. Even prescriptions are usually written in a language unintelligible to any but the druggist. As much secrecy is employed as in the preparation of proprietary medicines. Does the fact that an article is prepared by a process known only to the manufacturer render that article less valuable? How many physicians know the elementary composition of the remedies which they employ, some of which have never been analyzed? Few practitioners know how Morphine, Quinine, Podophyllin, Leptandria, Pepsin, or Chloroform are made, or how nauseous drugs are transformed into palatable elixirs; yet they do not hesitate to employ them. Is it not inconsistent to use a prescription, the composition of which is unknown to us, and discard another preparation simply because it is accompanied by a printed statement of its properties with directions for its use?

Some persons, while admitting that my medicines are good pharmaceutical compounds, object to them on the ground that they are too often used with insufficient judgment. I propose to obviate this difficulty by enlightening the people as to the structure and functions of the bodies, the causes, character and symptoms of disease, and by indicating the proper and judicious employment of my medicines, together with such auxiliary treatment as may be necessary. Such is one of the designs of the People's Medical Adviser, forty thousand copies of which have already been published, and are sold at the exceedingly low price of \$1.00 and a cent (post-paid) to any address within the United States and Canada.

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## WYOMING MONTHLY

## LOTTERY



## PAY AS YOU GO.

BY JOE JOT, JR.

You'll ever find this truth as so,  
It is always best to pay as you go;  
'Twill save you from many an endless pain.  
(I'm sorry, Smith; please call again!)

A man who's entirely out of debt  
Has a touch of the very best happiness yet,  
Free from trouble and free from sorrow.  
(If you please, Mr. Brown, I'll see you to-morrow.)

You can always tell a man who owes  
No man a cent, by the way he goes,  
And I'm sure his very countenance shows  
Just how—(Jones, call next week, and then I'll fix it right, or tell you when.)

When he lays him down to sleep at night  
Slumbers come easy and dreams are light;  
He doesn't wake at every sound,  
Thinking his creditors are around.  
And then—(Mr. Biggs, how do you do?  
I'll straighten that thing in a day or two.)

There's nothing half so dear or sweet  
As to go your way along the street,  
And not be afraid that each man you meet  
Will—(Black, I hope you'll mention it  
If we meet to-morrow and I should forget.)

When he gets a dollar he knows it's his own,  
And he feels as proud as a king on his throne,  
His conscience is clear of all the ills  
That constantly come from those little bills;  
And his heart is always light—(yes, Squire,  
I'll settle next week, or I'm a liar.)

Keep out of debt if you'd be honest and true  
To all that nature intended of you;  
Be a nobleman who can proudly say  
"I owe no man a penny lay."  
And hold your head aloft with the best,  
With peace in pocket and peace in breast.

Always—(Good-day, friend Jinks, nice weather,  
I was just this moment wondering whether  
That little tailor-bill was paid;  
I'm very sorry it was delayed;  
I never before got a thing on credit,  
And I'll pay it right off—as soon as I get it.)

## Found Wanting.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

SYLVIE WINTRINGHAM looked pleadingly into the handsome face that was bent so earnestly toward her—a dark, queenly face, with eyes that made one think of a Jewish princess, and hair as black as midnight skies.

"And you love him—you are sure, Sylvie? because, if you are, I never shall lay a straw in your way. You know that, darling?"

Miriam Lester laid her hand caressingly on the girl's golden hair, and smiled tenderly into the eager, upturned face, with its shy, proud blue eyes—blue as a violet petal, that were all aglow with the first love of her pure young life.

"You are always so good, Miriam; you are more like a mother to me than a half-sister, and I know perfectly well you will be as happy as I—if I marry Mr. Seville."

"Has it come to that, dear? Has Mr. Seville made you an offer of marriage?"

"It was only a few weeks ago, Miriam, that he—he told me he would like to have me for his little—wife before he went to Long Branch."

"And you are sure of your own heart, Sylvie?"

"Why do you ask me, Miriam? Is it because you think I am too young to know what I feel? or because you think my lover's handsome face has only fascinated me?"

"Oh, no, neither of those are my reasons. Frankly, I have heard Mr. Seville was a notorious lady's man, and had made his boasts he would only marry an heiress. I wouldn't have him break your heart, my darling."

"It is too bad that any one should think that of him! He loves me for myself, I am sure, and not because I am an heiress."

"Well, little sister, I only hope it will be all right. When he comes back again, I will see him, and I may be more favorably impressed by a personal acquaintance than I have been by report. He writes, Sylvie?"

"Oh, yes, twice every week—such lovely letters. Miriam, you never would doubt him if you could only read his lovely letters."

"If I was only going to Long Branch, instead of Saratoga, I might meet him. As it is, I may have to be patient a little longer. You have never mentioned me to him, have you?"

"Often and often. Why, he knows that I love my beautiful Miriam above all people."

"Then he only knows I am your sister Miriam! He has never heard I am Miss Lester."

"I think not. It never occurred to me; you are not hurt, dear, that—"

"Hurt, with you? Never! Only I hope this handsome Mr. Seville will have no power to cause you to feel wounded. Listen, Sylvie— isn't that Maud Myers' voice inquiring for you?"

A fortnight after that, Miss Lester's trunks, plainly marked with her full name, and labeled Saratoga, left the mansion on Madison avenue; an hour later, Miss Lester drove after them to the Grand Central Depot, where, instead of purchasing a ticket for the Springs, she ordered her baggage re-marked for Long Branch, and saw them off on an express truck, en route for the 145 boat, while she was driven to the pier in a hired coupe, her own carriage having been ordered home before she had made any alterations in her plans. She leaned back among the cushions, with a half-amused, half-pitiful smile on her face.

"I feel so sure it is only my little Sylvie's money he is after, and I shall bring to bear the strongest tests upon his loyalty. If he loves her nothing can tempt him. If he does not—poor little trusting girl! It is her first love, and the scars of the battle, if lost, will take a long time to wear off. But better the brief bitterness now—if bitterness there is to be—than a life of misery."

It was shortly before dusk—one of the most perfect evenings there had been at the seaside that season—and dozens of elaborately dressed ladies were promenading the long piazzas of the Ocean House, or sitting in picturesque groupings in the chairs, watching the continuous tide of fashion and elegance that surged by. Just in front of the entrance to the hotel an elegant harouche was in waiting—coachman and footman in olive green livery, and a span of coal-black horses, in gold-plated harness, impatiently pawing and champing, tossing their beautiful heads, and throwing flecks of snowy foam over their glossy breasts.

An elderly lady was sitting within, apparently waiting for some one. And in a second, Miriam Lester, in a faultless carriage costume, followed by her French maid, carrying her parasol and fan, came through the entrance and entered the carriage.

Among the group of gentlemen loungers one watched her eagerly, then turning to some one at his elbow.

"Who is that magnificent woman? I never saw such a walk, such a figure, in my life."

"Take care, Seville; you're the dozzenth man that has asked that question since the divinity arrived last night. Remember the golden-haired little girl of last winter, and then don't have eyes for anybody else."

"Just drop that, Lane! As if because a fellow's promised to a lily he has no right to enjoy the rose."

"By which I am to understand you intend to cultivate an acquaintance with Miss Lester?" "So she is Miss Lester; is she; the intimate friend of Mrs. Secretary Elworth? The Miss Lester I've heard of, I think, before. Why, Lane, a fellow would be an idiot not to cultivate her—she's a tremendous heiress, and—such a magnificent creature."

"What a deuced lucky thing it is that I'm on calling terms with Mrs. Elworth. I shan't be slow in paying my devours in that direction, mind you."

"For Miss Lester's especial benefit? Well, Rolf, it's to be expected she'll succumb—all the women do, it seems, to you."

"If they will, they will, Lane; and I don't see how I can help it. Indeed, a portion of my creed is—'take all the goods the gods give.'"

And as these two gentlemen sauntered along from the "Ocean House" to the "West End," Miss Lester was leaning back among the olive-green cushions of Mrs. Elworth's barouche—as picturesque and queenly as ever a proud, beautiful woman could be.

"Who was that fine-looking gentleman in a white cloth suit, who stood by the office-door as I came out, Mrs. Elworth? Did you observe him?"

"Mr. Seville, I think. A gentleman with blonde hair and long side-whiskers, no mustache?"

"The very one. I thought as much," Miriam returned, quietly, and nothing more was said on the subject.

Two days later, Rolf Seville bowed low over Miriam Lester's hand, in Mrs. Elworth's drawing-room, with a registered vow in his heart.

"I'll win her, by Jove, engagement or no engagement."

While Miriam, laughing and chatting with bewitching loveliness and archness, thought: "Now, my fine fellow, we'll see of what sort of stuff you are made!"

The brilliant season at Long Branch was passing, day by day, into only a tender memory of the past. A few cool days had driven some of the guests in hot haste home again, leaving only the creme de la creme to enjoy the delicious moonlight of those first September nights, and the fresh, cool breezes of the noons.

It had been an eventful summer to more than one fair girl, who had come to the crisis of her life beside those restless waves. Hearts had been broken; the happiness of many lives assured; hopes verified, fears realized; while to some, who lingered still, the problem of their fate was still unsolved. Perhaps it was that they were waiting for—at least it was that Rolf Seville tarried for, so long as Miriam Lester staid.

They two had become very intimate during those four weeks of sea-side summering. Mr. Seville had left no stone unturned to capture the heiress and beauty, while Miriam had used all her powers of fascination for his benefit. And the issue was fast approaching—just on their heels, as they sauntered leisurely on the sands one bright September morning.

"I fear you are a sad fellow, Mr. Seville. Positively, that is the second letter I've seen you receive this week, addressed in the same pretty hand."

"Merely a child's letter, I assure you, Miss Lester."

"But a very charming child, I am told, whom you intend to honor with your name some day. Miss Sylvie Wintringham, isn't it?"

"From Miss Wintringham, I'll admit. That I am engaged to her is a positive untruth. I am too deeply interested in another quarter." Miriam averted her face, and thoughtfully traced lines on the sand with her parasol. "I have seen Miss Wintringham—she is a sweet girl, Mr. Seville."

He shrugged his shoulders. "Yes—sweet. But one tires occasionally of sweetness alone. One longs for spice. A man's fancy may be attracted by a pretty face and cunning ways, but, Miss Lester, it is such women as yourself that take a man's heart by storm, that make him feel life a defeat unless fair hands like these crown him victor. Miss Lester—will you complete my life? will you love me as I love you? I worship you—my beautiful, beautiful darling, with all the ardor of a mature man. Am I to be so blessed?"

A pale pain crept over her splendid face—pain for Sylvie's sake. Then, a torrent of indignation, a touch of triumph in her voice as she answered him.

"If you were any other man than Rolf Seville, I would thank you for the high honor done me, even while I declined your offer. As it is, I simply despise you, and know you to be what I thought you were—what I have insisted upon to my dear little sister—my poor, wronged Sylvie. Shall I convey your withdrawal of your suit to Miss Wintringham, or will you, on my authority, accept your release from her?"

Of course, it was hard on little Sylvie, but she had good common sense, and Miriam comforted her, and to-day she is quite content.

## The Old Clock's Secret.

BY EBBE E. REXFORD.

"You shall marry Godfrey Marsh, Marcia," Mrs. Stanhope said, setting her teeth together, in that grim fashion of hers, which told that her mind was fully made up. "He is rich. He can give you a home second to none in all the country round. He can give you position and influence."

"I don't want a home, if I have got to marry for that, and nothing else," answered Marcia, bitterly. "I don't care for all the position and influence Godfrey Marsh can give me, if I have got to accept him with them. I hate him. If I married him I would not live with him a year."

"You are a foolish girl," her mother answered, sternly. "A very foolish girl. There isn't another girl in Hilbury that wouldn't jump at the chance you have. And I don't believe you will let it slip out of your hands when you think it over as a sensible girl should."

"I shall never change my mind," answered Marcia, with something of her mother's grim determination in her voice. "Never."

"You are thinking of Dick Gresham, of course," sneered Mrs. Stanhope. "He is a much more desirable fellow than Godfrey Marsh, I suppose. I infer that you would not hesitate to accept the position and influence he could give you, as Mrs. Gresham."

"I have never said anything of the kind," answered Marcia, with a rising flush. "He has never asked me to say anything of the kind, and I certainly shall wait till I am asked. Dick Gresham is an honest, respectable man, and the peer of Godfrey Marsh in every

way. Godfrey Marsh's money I count out of the question entirely."

"I understand how the case stands," said Mrs. Stanhope, sternly. "I have told you before, and I repeat it again, that you may understand me fully—never, with my consent, shall you marry Dick Gresham. I don't believe he cares half as much for you as you do for him. If he does, he doesn't show it as most men are apt to do, and you will save a good deal of gossip if you keep your fancy for him a little more to yourself. People are not blind."

And then Mrs. Stanhope went out, and Marcia sat and thought. Those last words of her mother's might hold a good deal of truth in them. She had sometimes wondered if Dick Gresham did care for her as she acknowledged to herself that she cared for him? He was not like most men. It was not in his nature to be demonstrative. Perhaps he was waiting to be sure of his own heart—and of her regard for him. She had been with him a good deal. She had wondered more than once if he loved her. If he did, he had never told her so. She believed that he did, however.

There was the rattle of carriage wheels at the gate. She looked out with a frown gathering on her face. She knew who was there, well enough.

"Is Marcia at home?" she heard Godfrey Marsh ask her mother. "If she is, I should like to take her out for a drive this afternoon."

"Yes," she heard her mother reply. "She'll be delighted to go. I'll call her." "I won't go," she thought, hurriedly, with a little angry gesture. Then she thought better of that decision. It would offend her mother if she refused, and their life was not a very harmonious one of late. And perhaps Dick Gresham might see them, and conclude to speak out.

So she got ready and went. While she was gone, Dick Gresham came to see her. Mrs. Stanhope met him coldly, but politely.

He inquired for Marcia. "She has gone out to ride with Godfrey Marsh," Mrs. Stanhope answered, with an inward chuckle at the discomfited look on Dick's face.

"I am very sorry," he said. "I wanted to see her very much. I am going away this evening, and I do not know how long I shall be gone, nor how far I shall go. I wanted to say something to her before I went." Dick knew that Mrs. Stanhope hated him. He felt it. But he was frank and honest with her.

"I can't say when she will be back," Mrs. Stanhope said. "I think Mr. Marsh expects to stop to tea. From that, I infer that they will be gone most of the afternoon."

"Yes, quite likely," answered Dick, absently. "I shall not see her, then. But I might write what I wanted to say, and leave it for you to give her."

"Yes, you could do that," she said; "you will find pen and paper in the secretary's room."

"It's the best I can do," thought Dick. "I'd much rather have said it, but, if I can't do that, I'll have to do the next best thing."

He wrote down what he came to say to Marcia Stanhope, and sealed it in an envelope, upon which he wrote her name.

"If you will give it to her," he said, laying it down upon the table by Mrs. Stanhope, "you will be doing me a favor. I had rather not tell you what I have written, though perhaps you have a right to know. Marcia may tell you."

Then he said good-by and went away. "I have a right to know, according to his own admission," Mrs. Stanhope said, and tore away the envelope. She read his letter through carefully.

"I think fate is playing into my hands," she said, grimly. "It will be quite a long time before your letter is answered, if I am not mistaken, Dick Gresham."

She went to the old clock in the corner, opened it, and dropped the letter down into its mysterious depths.

"There!" she said, shutting the door upon its secret, "that is disposed of safely, I think."

The next morning she spoke up suddenly to Marcia, as they were at work in the kitchen together. "Dick Gresham was here yesterday to see you. He said he was going away last night, and didn't know how far he was going, nor how long he should be gone. He has joined the engineering-party going from Hilbury to the West. He told me to tell you good-by for him."

"That was all?" Marcia said it sharply, as if the words cost her a great effort. Her face was very pale.

"Yes, that was all," answered Mrs. Stanhope, busy with the milk-pans. "He never cared for me, I'm sure," Marcia whispered to her pillow that night, and then cried herself to sleep.

It was a pleasant afternoon in October when Mrs. Stanhope died. The sky was full of dreamy vagueness—a haze through which the sunshine filtered goldenly, and hid the mountains far off, and made the hills near by seem like the hills of some ghostly land. The leaves of the old chestnut by the door were dropping softly and with a slow rustle that kept time to the ticking of the old clock in the corner.

Mrs. Stanhope had been failing slowly for years. Her life had faded as the day fades; you scarcely can tell that the light is going out, but the first you know it is gone. It was so with her. The light was almost gone out, now. It only flickered for a moment; then there would be darkness.

"Marcia," she said, faintly.

"Well, mother?"

"There is something I want to tell you. I ought to have told you long ago. Dick Gresham left a letter for you when he went away. I read it, and hid it in the old clock. It is there yet. When I am gone, find it and read it. But not till then, Marcia." She looked up playfully into Marcia's face.

"No, not till then," Marcia promised, with a strange feeling of expectancy, regret and anger at heart. What did that hidden letter have to say? Perhaps—and then she tried to put all thought of it out of her head until the time came for her to know what Dick had had to say. But she could not do that.

By-and-by Mrs. Stanhope said she wanted to go to sleep. Marcia arranged her pillows, and the sick woman closed her eyes wearily. She slept long and well, for she never woke again.

The funeral was over. And then came that awful sense of desolation which follows "after the burial." Whoever has passed through this experience of life can never forget the dreary loneliness, the solemn silence that is about the house. The world seems to have stopped for a little time.

Tick, tick! the old clock kept repeating that

night, and Marcia went to it to solve the mystery it held. She took off the old door, and removed the curiously-carved front. In the bottom, covered with the dust of fifteen years, she found the letter she had never known of for so long.

She read it through with a curious blending of pleasure to know that Dick had loved her, and bitter regret for what she had lost. If she had only known then! Now her life must go on as it had gone so long, but she should have it to think of that *he had loved her!*

She laid her head down against the old clock and cried softly. His love would have been so sweet. It would have made life so pleasant. But—it was lost. It had been lost for fifteen years.

There was a knock at the door. She got up, drying her eyes hastily, and went to admit her visitor, hardly conscious of what she was doing, but acting more from force of habit than anything else.

A man stood on the threshold.

"Marcia," he said, and held out his hand. "You don't know me, I guess. I am Dick Gresham. I came back to-day. I heard of your mother's death, and I knew you'd be lonesome, and I thought perhaps you'd be glad to see an old friend, so I made bold to come."

"Oh, Dick, Dick!" she cried, and then broke down in true woman fashion. "I wonder how you sent me here to-night? I have just found the letter you wrote and left for me before you went away. I never knew there had been one till three days ago. You can't blame me for not writing, as you asked me to, Dick," and then the face of this woman, whose eyes were thirty-five, and out of whose heart you would have supposed all girlish romance had fled, grew suddenly hot with sweet shame to think of what her words meant.

"God sent me, I guess," he said, with a great gladness in his face, and he caught her to his heart, and kissed her. "I was sure you loved me, Marcia, but the letter I looked for never came, and I thought your mother had got you to thinking as she did. So I gave up hoping for that which I took for granted I had lost, and I stayed away because there was nothing to draw me back here. A month ago I got it into my head that I wanted to see Hilbury again, and I came back. They told me that you were Marcia Stanhope yet, and I think that set me to hoping a little. You see, it's hard to give up hoping, in the first place, and it doesn't take much to set a man to hoping again, after he thinks he's given it up, for *he can't forget*."

And so, after fifteen years, the old clock gave its secret up, and two hearts came together to never be parted more.

## The Father's Sacrifice.

BY RALPH RINGWOOD.

"It war down at the Old Mission, b'low San Antonio, whar the thing took place," said old Joe, as we gathered around the trapper after the camp had been properly looked to.

Joe had been absent from the company for several months, having been up in the Mimbres on a private trapping excursion, in company with Rube Langly, and had returned to us only that morning.

It seemed that, before hunting us up, the old fellows had gone down to San Antonio, and while there had gone out to the Old Mission, some two or three miles from the town, on some business or other—exactly what, I do not now remember.

During the night they had been attacked by a number of Mexicans, who held a grudge against Rube for something he had done, and a severe fight ensued, during which Rube had been badly wounded in the shoulder by an *escopet ball*.

"Ther derned skunks," said old Joe, "didn't kin at us like men oughter when thar's ten uv 'em to 'n'y two uv us, but hed ter go an' sneak up like a passel uv dod-rotted cowards, an' open onto us through a winder whar hedn't no shutter. Waugh! ther cussed varmints! but won't I jess get even on this hyar! Well, I reckon."

"Is Rube much hurt?" I asked, anxiously, for the old trapper was an especial favorite with all of us.

"Well, boyee, thet's considering whar yer calls much hurt," said Joe. "Ther ball bit purty deep, but didn't bust no bones, so I reckon Rube'll be along, in a few days, enny how."

The men were all much excited, and it required all of old John's authority to restrain them from saddling up and starting for a Greaser settlement that lay westward some twenty miles.

"Quiet these fellows down, Joe," said the captain, "or they'll be doing some mischief before morning."

The trapper turned and walked over to where a group of excited rangers were talking, and at once joined the conversation.

"It ar' a quare thing, boyees," he said. "I've been a-thinkin' over it since I kem hyar. It ar' jess twenty year, to a day, sence a wuss thing nor this happened to me down at thet same durned Old Mission; a heap wuss, I kin tell yer."

"How war it, old hoss?" exclaimed one of the fellows, while they all drew round Joe, for the moment forgetting their plans of revenge in the desire to hear what could possibly be worse than the treacherous wounding of the company's favorite, old Rube.

"It war wuss, boyees," said Joe, "bekase a female gal, an' a' awful purty one at thet, war in the bizness, and she— But hold on, I'll begin at the beginnin'."

"Oncet a Mexiken—he war a Don, an' hed his haciender jess across the Grande—done a lot uv us fellers a good turn by gettin' in his peons together an' pitchin' in when ther Comanch hed purty high waxed us handson'."

"He war a fine-lookin' feller, an' when I see him in San Antonio, five year arter thet skirmage, I knowed him like a book."

"He war on a visit thar wif his darter, es purty an' nice a young gal es ever a feller took a hankerin' arter."

"At thet time—fur yer must recollect, boyees, thet it war twenty year ago—the Comanch didn't make nothin' uv cavortin' all over the kentry round San Antonio, an' I knows uv more'n a dozen settlers an' peoles as lost ther ha'r not half a mile from ther town; yes, an' one or two uv 'em right in among the houses on ther outskirts."

"Well, arter the Don an' his darter hed seed all thar wur in the place, he got a notion as how him an' the gal would go down to ther Ole Mission an' say ther prars in the place whar the padre, or priest, or whatever yer calls them fellers, hed fixed up wif candles an' things. So, one day, the Mexiken an' his darter, an' half a dozen Greasers as he had along for a guard, mounted an' put out for the ole rancho—Mission, I means."

"Now, then, them Greasers ain't never no good in a tight place, an' when I see the Don an' his purty gal ride by, an' these here six big louts a-trottin' along arter 'em wif ther frog-stickers in ther hands, I sed to Ben McIntyre, who war close by, thet, of ther Comanch shed happen to be round, that guard wouldn't 'mount to much."

"Ben sed he thort so, too, an' then ther matter drapped."

"But, all thet mornin' I kept thinkin' 'bout the Don an' his gal, an' by noon I war in sich a durned fligit thet I couldn't rest nohow, an' went right away an' hunted Ben an' ther balance uv the boyees up. They all knowed what the Don hed done fer us—some uv 'em war along at the time; so, when I tole 'em we oughter go and see thet the gal didn't kem to no harm, ther war in the saddle in less'n five minits. When we got in sight uv the Ole Mission every thing war quiet an' peaceable like, an' nary a sign uv a Comanch nowher."

"'Water haul, Joe," said Ben.

"'I'm durned glad on it, sed I."

"'Let's go in an' see how ther thing works,' sez another; I b'lieve it war Ned Colton, though I won't be sartin. An' we piled off, hitched our cattle to some musket bushes, an' went inside."

"Now, ef I war to live a hundred year more, I wouldn't never forgit a sight I see as I went into the chapel, as they called it."

"Thar war a powerful nice flixin' up at the fur end uv ther place, all over bright colors, an' jess blazin' wif candles, but whar war purtier n' all this war the fligger uv the Don's darter, on ther hunkers afore ther place, sayin' her prars."

"Somehow, I felt it warn't the place fur me, an' so I slips out, an' findin' a star'way that led up above, I climbed 'em, an' got cl'ar on the top uv ther buildin'." An' I tell yer, boyees, I didn't get up thar too soon, yer bet I didn't. Ther kentry, on every side, could be seen for a long ways, an' naterally like, I looks aroun' to see ef thar war enny sign uv a red-skin in the neighborhood."

"I wish I may die, boyees, when I faced westward, ef I didn't jess like to drap in my tracks. It took the wind right outen me, an' fur a minit I stood thar gaping wuss nor a yaller catfish on a sandbank."

"Thar ther wur, not more'n a mile away, tharin' down onto ther mission fur all the world like a black cloud wif a north'ard behind it—a go'd hunderd Comanch."

"In five minits more thet'd be among 'em below, and when I thort uv that white fligger thet I had jess seen on her two knees, down stairs, I tell you thet thet fligger jess straightened them niggers on ther hosses' backs and they a mile off on the perrairy."

"Our fellers knowed the yell meant danger, an' gathered in a minit, and by the time I got down stars they hed ev'ry hoss in ther church, the old Don's an' all, an' war ready fur the imp's jess es soon as they'd gallop wifin range. It war a bustin' big war party, ther allers wus when thar kem thet fur down, an' I see in a minit that they wur as pizen as rattlers."

"An' mad! I reckon. You see they didn't look fur to find us thar. Es we arterwards found out, a durned nigger uv a half-breed war in spyin' fur the band as lay off in the timber on Sand Creek, and when the Don started fur the mission, he puts out an' tells ther varmints."

"Yer see, when they heard ther rangers' whoop it kinder got 'em back, yer know. Well, well, the fout commenced, an' it wur purty much like all sich."

"The young gal war a trumpe, boyees, I'll